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PS Extreme

Volume 1 • Issue 8 • July 1996

THE PLAYER'S UNOFFICIAL MONTHLY GUIDE TO THE PLAYSTATION

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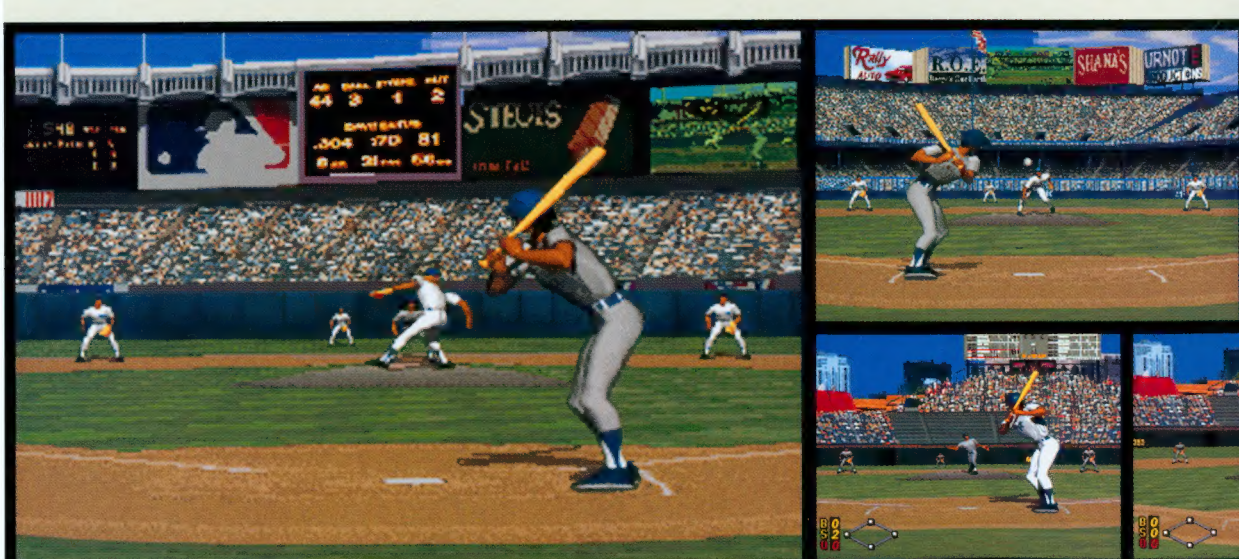

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PlayStation

League Baseball Player Association. Logo © MLBPA MSA. Developed by Sony Interactive Studios America. © 1996 Sony Interactive Entertainment Inc. Call 1-800-771-3772 for information on Game Ratings. For game hints call 1-900-933-SONY (7669). The charge is $.95 per minute (avg. length of call 4 min.). Callers under the age of 18 must get parental permission to call. Touch-tone phone is required. Available 24 hours a day/7 days a week. U.S. only. http://www.sony.com.

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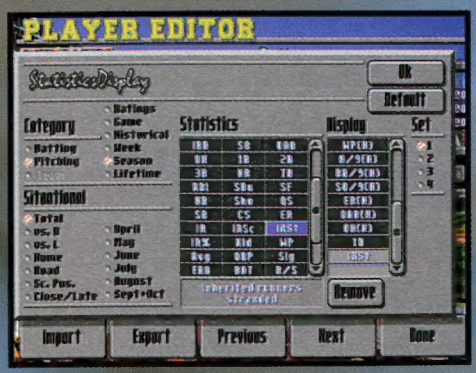

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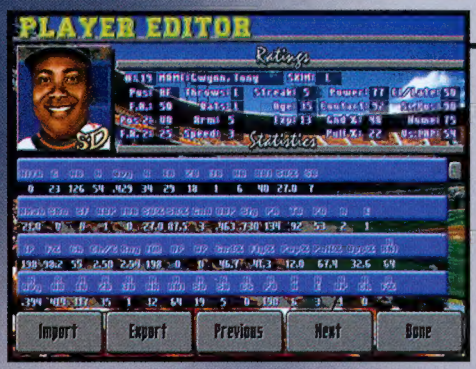

Create your own players from scratch, or modify any player's ratings, or even their physical attributes! The resulting player will be true-to-life, on-field and off.

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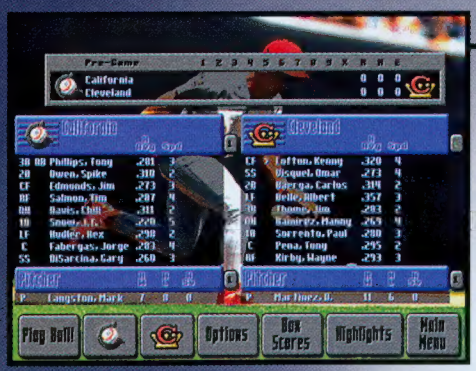

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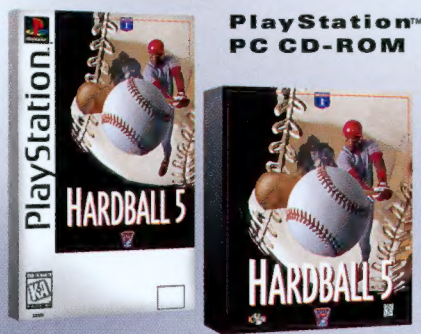

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VOLUME 1 • ISSUE 8
JULY, 1996

SO, DAVE...

EDITORIAL

TELL US WHAT YOU REALLY THINK

IN THE EXTREME

EXNEWS: Page 12
PlayStation drops to $199, Sega doesn't do PlayStation, Reggie does EA and other stuff.

EXECUTE: Page 14
Strategies for Wing Commander, cheats for In the Hunt and Theme Park, plus this Month's Contest Winner!

EXCLUSIVE: Page 16
King's Field II packs more polygon pushing power than any RPG on Earth!

EXTREME: Page 18
Universal brings you one of the hottest, fastest 3D corridor games seen on any platform. If you think it looks good still, you should see it in motion!

EXPECTING E3 Report: Page 20
Holy crow, Earl, lookie there! 20 whole pages packed with completely new, never-before-seen games!

EXRATED: Page 40
Fade to Black, Skeleton Warriors, Battle Arena Toshinden 2, Triple Play 97, and much more, all get the big EX this month.

EXPORT: Page 58
More from off-shore, Galaxian3, Rockman X3, Welcome House and Irem Arcade Classics all grace the spread this month.

SONY GETS SERIOUS

Certainly, the biggest news of the recently concluded Electronics Entertainment Exposition has to be the $100 price drop on the PlayStation. What does it mean to you and I? Plenty. With a lower price tag comes more consumers to the market. My own experience as a consumer and professional in the video game industry tells me that it means about 3 million US PlayStation owners by this time in '97. If SCEA can pull-off another price drop next Spring, say $149 with Crash Bandicoot as the pack-in, they will then penetrate the "mass-market" and begin chasing 16-bit (30 million units in the US between the Genesis and SNES) type numbers.

What this means to gamers is stability in the platform, tons of add-ons and peripherals and more and better games (and more pages in PS*Extreme*.) The software development community is firmly behind Sony at this point and this relationship will only get stronger as the market gets bigger. Sega has already shown an inability to keep hold of their 16-bit consumer, the PC and Windows '95 have been remarkably ineffective at attracting the console gamer and Nintendo is late to the marketplace with an expensive piece of gear. The majority of third party developers and publishers see the PlayStation as their primary source of income for '96 and '97 and that is where they are putting their money, resources and strongest development teams.

The best part of this is that, because of increased competition and the development community becoming more familiar with the PlayStation and its relative strengths and weaknesses, the games will get bigger and better. Sony has already demonstrated a 60 fps version of Ridge Racer to its developers and games like Crash, Tekken 2, Pandemonium, GameDay '97 and others represent a significant leap from the first generation games that we are currently enjoying.

I hope that you enjoy our E3 wrap-up. There are a ton of great games coming for the holiday season and the future looks incredibly bright for PlayStation owners. In closing, I will borrow a line from Sony's marketing department that sums up how we all feel about the next wave of software..."It's not the second generation, it's the second coming."

Dave

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Dear EX*Mail*,

First, let me tell you that you put out the best magazine for the PlayStation... Bar none!!! Second, Resident Evil rocks!!! There is no doubt in my mind that it's one of the best PlayStation games I've ever played. What you said about the game was right on the money. The Tyrant sure gave me the creeps. If I had one complaint about the game, it's that I wish you could move when drawing your weapon. Before I sign off, I have some questions that I hoped you could answer for me:

1. Do you know any codes in Resident Evil that let you play any characters like Barry or Rebecca? How about unlimited ammo? It sure would help to fight off those pesky Hunters. Heck, is there a code that will let you see those "bloody" FMV scenes that Sony of America made Capcom remove?
2. Doom was great on the PlayStation. I was wondering, is there any plan (to make) a PlayStation version of other popular PC corridor shooter games like Heretic, Hexen, Duke Nukem 3D or StarWars: Dark Forces?
3. I read in another magazine that Square of Japan is planning to release the next Final Fantasy on the PlayStation. Is this monster RPG ever going to come to our shore?
4. Finally, is Capcom going to do a sequel of Resident Evil?

Sincerly,
David Norton
Redding, CA

1. There are no codes to play as different characters, but you can normally play as Rebecca if you choose to play as Chris from the start. When you meet Rebecca the first time, ask her to come with you. Then, later in the game (when you get poisoned), she'll come to your aid and you'll be able to play as her to rescue Chris. The only way to get unlimited ammo is by using a Game Shark (an add-on cheating device). There's no way to see the bloodier intro in the American version. Other than the copious amounts of blood spraying everywhere (it doesn't look real anyway), the main difference between the two is the severed hand attached to the gun laying in the grass and the head that tumbles to the ground when you encounter the first zombie.
2. The only one of those games NOT coming out for the PlayStation is Heretic.
3. Yes!
4. There are no such plans at this time.

Dear PS*Extreme*,

In response to your monthly contest, I have discovered a nifty little trick on my PlayStation. I believe that all Namco, Capcom and some Sony games will work. The games I have that work with this trick (out of 10) are: "Ridge Racer", "Cybersled", "Tekken", "Street Fighter Alpha", "Twisted Metal", "ESPN: Extreme Games", and the first PlayStation "Picks" demo CD.
Now here is what to do: First, turn on the PlayStation with nothing in the CD-ROM. Next, select the CD player. Now, as the audio screen reads all zeros, open the cover and place one of the above games into the player and close the cover. The PlayStation will begin spinning the game and all of a sudden, numerous tracks will appear! These tracks are actually sounds and songs of the game! Since most PlayStation games don't offer sound tests, this is a great way to sample the audio. Tekken and Street Fighter Alpha's tracks number over 40 and I have discovered a few unused surprise songs on my compatable games.
I'm sure that many other games utilize this feature, for I own only ten games. Please let all the other PlayStation fans know of this unique trick and I hope it is good enough to win your awesome contest.

Keep up the excellent work!
Kristian Mroczko
Whitefield, NH

Sorry, you didn't win the contest. You can also listen to the music from some PS games simply by putting the game in a normal audio CD player.

Dear PS*Extreme*,

In your April issue of PS*Extreme* in the "Notes from the (cutting) edge" Michael Hare wrote to you in reference to NTSC/PAL gaming for the PSX.
Your reply mentioned the Game Shark as a NTSC/PAL switch (undocumented), can you please inform me as to whether or not the following would work?:
I have an NTSC (USA) PSX and I have WORMS (PAL version). Are you saying that if I buy a Game Shark and do the (secret) trick as well as holding down L1&R1 on my controller I'll be able to play WORMS?

Curious,
Keith
keith@dcna.com

We made a boo-boo. While you can change the output of the Game Shark's screen from NTSC to PAL and back, it doesn't affect the games themselves. Sorry for the misleading info. There is, however, still a few ways to do it. If you've got yourself an RGB cable and a monitor that it works with (see the May 1996 EXMail) you can see PAL video output. You can also look in the back of the larger video and electronics magazines for mail order companies on the East Coast that sell PAL TVs. Then, on top of all that, you've got to own a European PlayStation, because Sony uses "Country Codes" to keep people from playing foreign games. (BTW, the reason they do this is because they don't make any money when you buy an "import".)

Dear Best video game mag in the universe,

I will start out in sayin' that y'all have THE best mag anywhere. I have lots of questions I hope y'all can answer:
1. What does B-1 Airstrike do on Agile Warrior F-111X?
2. Will y'all please bring back impact or give an explanation that says why it will never be back?
3. I think your mag should have a section that tells the most accurate up-to-date dates on all them PlayStation games. (By the way, I just read your April issue and love your new section EX*CAVATE*)
4. If y'all have ANY games including early versions that y'all won't be needin' anymore send them straight to me.
5. Will y'all tell us any new b-ball games that have Magic, Jordan, or Shaq.

Well thanx for your time
Sean Calkins
Wimberley, TX

1. A squadron of B-1 bombers flies overhead and drops some big ol' bombs.
2. Impact will never be back 'cause the people (an independant company) who did Impact didn't comprehend the meaning of the words "deadline" or "exclusive infos", so we said "Sayanora".
3. There's no such thing as accurate dates in this industry.
4. Ch'uh, right.
5. Slam 'n Jam!

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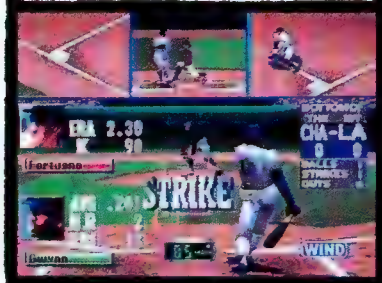

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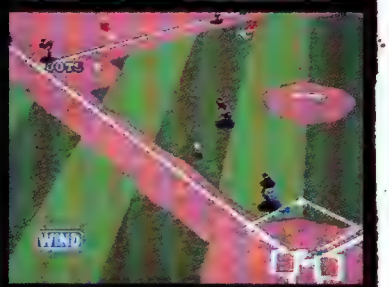

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PlayStation Gaming News

From Around The Globe

HELL MAY HAVE FROZEN, BUT THE DEVIL HAS A BLOW TORCH

In the last edition of EXNews, we reported that SegaSoft had two PlayStation titles in development. Subsequent to E3, this is no longer the case. Based on information provided to us by Sega's public relations people, we made the initial report. Although this is pure speculation, we believe that the PlayStation price drop (and Sega's subsequent announcement that they too would market their hardware at $199.95) and Sega's weakening position in the US marketplace has caused them to re-think their third-party position — it's O.K. to publish software for the PC — no direct competition there, but heaven forbid that you give in to the competition and actually try and make money on another console. It's downright un-American and a slap in the face to all Green-bean fearing and hard-walking Republicans! Anyway, Sega's "official" position is that the original story came from some "over-zealous" PR folks and that Sega had no intention of developing for PlayStation...uh, huh.

THE FAT LADY IS ON IN FIVE...

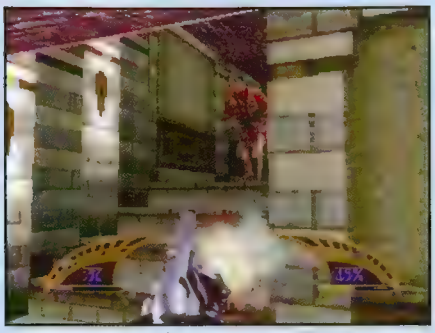
Just to give E3 a proper kickoff, Sony Computer Entertainment of America's Jim Whims announced that, effective immediately, the retail price of the PlayStation would drop to $199. This first-day announcement was greeted with a fair amount of glee by the media and a tremendous amount of shock and "it doesn't matter(s)" by both Nintendo and Sega. The reasons behind the move? Try these; (1) SCEA currently finds themselves as the next-generation market leader in the US — a position they have no plans of relinquishing in the near future, (2) The day before, Nintendo officially introduced the Nintendo 64 to the American press — a very impressive piece of hardware with an equally hefty price tag ($340 by the time you buy Mario 64 and a memory card), (3) SCEA has won the battle for the first million consumers and the $199 price tag is necessary to make that number become three million, (4) It (the price drop) forces Sega to take a bigger per unit loss on the Saturn — they are already gushing red ink with the Saturn and this deepens the wound, and (5) Nintnedo will be able to ship only 500,000 units of the N64 before Christmas — a number that doesn't allow the hardware to make any kind of decent market penetration. Is this the salvo that SCEA needed to achieve market dominance?

REGGIE... REGGIE... REGGIE!

EA Sports, Sport Accolade and Sony were battling it out at E3, each trying to top the other's in-booth sports celebrities. But, none was bigger (to this reporter, at least) than Reggie Jackson, appearing for a private conversation with about 20 journalists at the EA Sports bar on the floor of the show. Mr. October was in rare form, speaking on topics ranging from expansion and its effect on pitching and sacred baseball records, to Dennis Rodman and his 15 minutes. Officially, Reggie was at the show to promote EA's Triple Play 97 (reviewed in this issue) and, as he does so well, to hold court. Reggie spent two days in Vancouver, helping the Triple Play design team in fine-tuning the product and giving his opinions to the team. In an era in professional sports where image is everything and substance is nothing, it was an absolute pleasure to talk with Reggie and hear the man speak, and we thank EA Sports for the opportunity to meet one of the true legends of the game.

STUDIO 3DO IS ALIVE AND WELL ON THE PLAYSTATION

One of the more low-profile announcements at E3 was made by those not-so-low-profile marketing types at Acclaim Entertainment. Acclaim will be bringing three of the 3DO's best titles to the PlayStation later this year. Killing Time, a superb



first-person action/adventure game that has you trying to solve the mystery of the Water Clock (and stay alive) on millionaire Tess Conway's remote island estate — inhabited by the un-dead, Battle Sport, a futuristic, Ballblazer type contest in real-time 3D, and Star Fighter, a texture-mapped, real-time 3D shooter, will all be arriving for the holidays. It will be great to see these excellent titles exposed to a larger market. Look for more information on these products in the near future, as it becomes available.

ONLINE WITH ZACH

Item #1: Every time I peruse the rec.games.video.sony newsgroup, there are several messages cursing the demonic forces at Interact Accessories, distributors of the Game Shark, for charging bucks to get codes, while the European manufacturer of the Shark, Datel, posts codes for free on its Web site. That'll still be the case, but with a catch guaranteed to get even more Usenetters' undies in a bunch: Interact now has a 30-day exclusive on Shark codes before Datel shares them with the world. According to one source at Interact, the reason Datel gives info away is that they can't be bothered to turn the distribution of codes into a "profit center." The same source also claims that Interact is still thinking of releasing the make-your-own-codes PC Comms Link in the U.S., which would seem to be a major-league conflict. Stay tuned.
Item #2: The Usenet Post Of The Month, from Aaron Tellure (my best guess at his name, considering the hellishly confusing format of Usenet posts):

"So we all know from E3 that the 'black' PSX is a $1200 development kit which supposedly comes with all the tools and libraries as the very expensive kits meant for game companies. This is superb. Imagine an underground PSX game market developing with shareware. Some hardcore European hacker buys the kit and codes the tightest rendering algorithm ever seen. He puts it into a totally original one-man game and makes it shareware, available via FTP. You put it off the Net, burn yourself a CD-R of it—or get one burned—and boom, instant underground gaming. I shiver at the thought of some really talented coders like we had for the C64 and Amiga getting hold of a black PSX. Imagine the INCREDIBLE demos we could see! Some of the most creative, innovative stuff still comes from one or two-man teams, not giant game developers."

Item #3: A nifty World Wide Web page that gives you a couple dozen links to PlayStation Web sites, which in turn lead to dozens more—it's the mother of all pyramid schemes. Go to (take a deep breath) http://www.yahoo.com/Regional/Countries/Japan/Business/Electronics/Sony/Sony_Electronics/Sony_PlayStation and link your brains out.

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SEND US YOUR CODES AND WIN BIG!

Each month we'll pick the best code sent in by our loyal and intelligent readers and send that person a brand spankin' new copy of ASCII's hot new RPG for the PlayStation, King's Field. But wait! That's not all: if you act now, we'll also include ASCII's super stylish Turbo Control Pad for the PlayStation, for your controlling pleasure. PLUS twelve (12) free issues of the best, the only, monthly dedicated PlayStation magazine, PSExtreme, of course! Wow, that's a lot of cool stuff for just a code; what are you waiting for?

WE HAVE A WINNER!

Congratulations and thanks go to this month's winner, Malcolm Claridge of Tasmania, Australia. Ok, so the code is for an older game, it's still a cool one! Besides, the guy's from Tasmania, it's probably new there anyway, eh?

ESPN Extreme Games

ALWAYS WIN/CASH COURSE:

Go to the equipment room and then proceed to the TV-1. Press ■, then go to the equipment selections and deactivate each CPU Player by pressing ×. Proceed into racing by choosing a course. You will notice that you are the only one in the race — you will always come in first no matter what! Make sure you get all the gates and you'll get to race on the Cash Course!

CONTEST RULES: Anyone of any age can enter. The only people not eligible to win are employees of Dimension Publishing or ASCII Entertainment, their friends, family, pets and anyone they talk to or know of. Dimension Publishing reserves the right to make any and all decisions regarding the contest. One winner per month will be chosen at Dimension Publishing's discretion, based on the code or trick supplied by the entrant.

GAME SHARK Codez

Sorry, there's no Game Shark code section this month due to the huge number of games in the E3 Report section. Be sure to check in next month for all the latest and greatest codes available!

No good codes this month, just this mini-strategy guide for WC III to hold you over 'til next month.

Wing Commander III

WINGMAN STRATEGIES

- If you're going to order your wingman to break and attack, do it as soon as possible, so that he has room to maneuver. If you wait until you're both close to the enemy ship, you'll get in each other's way.
- Target an enemy ship from the farthest range possible and tell your wingman to "attack my target." Now you can target and attack another enemy ship.
- Your wingman closes in on enemy ships faster than you, which leads to a nasty strategy: tell your wingman to attack a target, wait for an enemy to attack him, and then attack the enemy, using your own wingman as a decoy.
- Wingmen are better at destroying capital ships than you are, so it's often wise to sic a wingman on a cap ship while you take out the escort fighters.
- Nothing you do while in combat affects your wingman's morale, whether you shoot him, send him against a fleet of enemy ships, or ignore him completely. If you destroy a wingman, however, you're taken into custody and court-martialed when you return to the Victory.
- Each wingman in WC III is immortal at the start of the game; if his ship is destroyed, he's picked up and returned to the Victory. After a certain point, though, the wingman can be killed if his ship is taken out. It's a wise strategic move to take "immortal" wingmen with you on most missions.
- It's important to mix up your wingmen during the game. If you keep flying with the same wingman mission after mission, the morale of the other wingmen declines, and the wingman you keep choosing starts feeling pressured.
- You can tell if a wingman's morale is high or low by what he says during battle. (We've included the high morale and low morale lines that each wingman uses after scoring a kill.)

WINGMAN PROFILES

- Cobra is an excellent pilot and a great gunner. When her morale is low, she's more aggressive and disobeys all your orders. She can't be killed in the game (until Hobbes claws her intestines out). High-morale kill: "Yeah! Got the son-of-a-gun." Low-morale kill: "Another dead cat."
- Flash is identical to Cobra; he's an ace pilot and a brilliant gunner who gets more aggravated and flaunts authority when his morale is low. He can't be killed until the second mission in the Torgo System. High-morale kill: "Choke on that, you flea bag." Low-morale kill: "Chalk up another one for the Flashman."
- Flint has only average courage, but she follows orders perfectly. When her morale is low, she loses all aggressiveness and courage, and starts disobeying some of your orders. She can't be killed until the final group of missions in the Kilrah System. High-morale kill: "One less Kilrathi." Low-morale kill: "Enemy engaged and shot down."
- Hobbes is the best wingman of the bunch; he has only average aggressiveness, but in every other category, he's the tops. Better still, he's not affected by morale at all. He can't be killed until he kills Cobra and flees the Victory. When this happens, you have two choices. You can chase and kill him immediately, but Vaquero is killed while you're away; or you can wait until the final mission of the game, when Hobbes is flying as Prince Thrakhath's wingman.
- Maniac is surprisingly low on courage, and won't obey any of your orders, but he's great at killing Kilrathi. He's mostly unaffected by morale, but seems to fly better when you insult him and make him angry. He can't be killed until the second mission in the Torgo System. High-morale kill: "More kitty litter! I'm hot today!" Low-morale kill: "One more for the kill board."
- Vagabond is a courageous pilot who's heavily affected by morale. When it's low, he gets more aggressive, less careful, and refuses to obey orders. He can't be killed until the first mission of the Hyperion System. High-morale kill: "Nailed that critter!" Low-morale kill: "Another one down."
- Vaquero is an average pilot who doesn't excel at anything except following all your orders. When his morale is low, his aggression, carefulness, and courage all drop, and he starts disobeying you. He can't be killed until Hobbes murders Cobra and flees the Victory. High-morale kill: "Eat [a nasty four-letter word that means "defecation"] and die, gato!" Low-morale kill: "That cat won't bug us no more."

MORALE

- The conversations you have in WC III affect the morale of the wingmen and of the ship. At the start of the game, everyone's morale is at an average level; after that, what you do and say changes the levels. Winning or losing missions doesn't affect morale. Ship morale affects certain conversations on the ship. Each wingman has a certain morale range; in other words, some wingmen can have lower (or higher) morale than others.

COMBAT STRATEGIES

- Use taunts to distract enemy Kilrathi from their current targets. The more aggressive the enemy pilot, the more taunts it takes before he finally decides to come after you.
- Always turn off your cockpit and set your guns to full before you leave the Victory for the first nav point. Turning off the cockpit gives you much more visibility, and full guns makes it much easier to shoot down enemy ships.
- While there's a wide variety of Kilrathi craft, all you really need to know is one attack strategy: don't attack them head-on. Attack them from the side or from behind whenever possible. One simple tactic is to use afterburners to fly underneath them, then turn around and shoot them as you fly past.
- Here's an impressive and difficult piloting method: keep your engines set to a very low speed and use afterburners to fly around. This gives you a great deal of accuracy with your weapons, but also makes you a pathetically easy target.
- Don't be ashamed to fly away from the battle for a few seconds if you've been hit to give your shields time to regenerate.
- Use IR missiles against the gun platforms, which are the nastiest enemies in the game. They're almost impossible to strafe.
- Use the simulator at Flight Control; it has just about every type of mission you'll encounter in the "real" game.

MISSIONS

- There are 16 series of missions in WC III, with two to four missions in each series. A few of the missions are optional, but most of them have to be flown. If you lose a particular mission, you might be placed on the game's "losing path." This is bad, and you want to get back on the winning track ASAP. Unfortunately, there's one series of missions (the Proxima System) that you're going to lose no matter what you do; if you end up in this System, restore your last saved game and try again.

Send all code submissions to:
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1175 Chess Drive, Suite E
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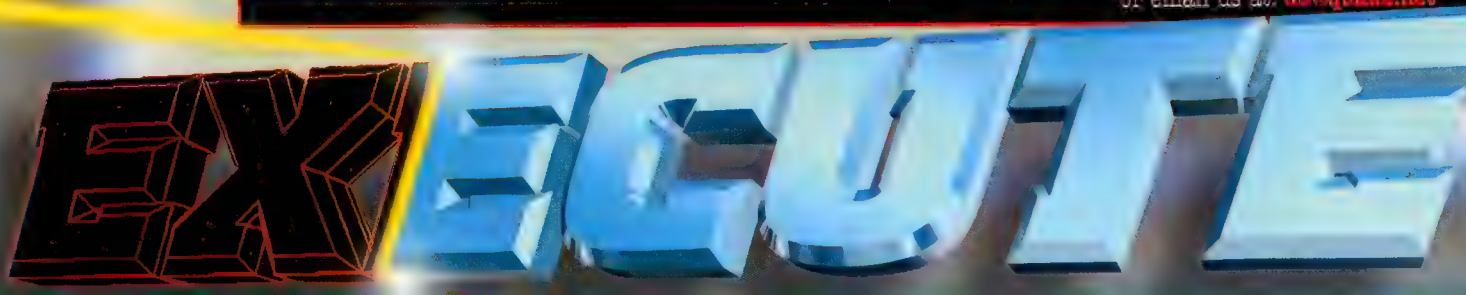

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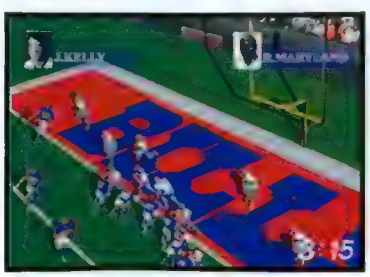
A memory card may be required for some features.



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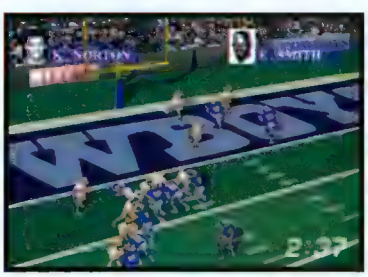

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KING'S FIELD II

PUBLISHED BY ASCII - DEVELOPED BY FROM

In the beginning, PlayStation gamers cried, "We want RPG's", but their cries fell on deaf ears. Only one company was listening and that was ASCII Entertainment. ASCII answered loudly with King's Field, a first-person, real-time 3D adventure unlike any seen before. They made a killing. King's Field quickly rose to the single digits on everyone's charts. Now, mere months from the release of the first, ASCII has announced that the sequel will be available in time to make a perfect Christmas stocking-stuffer.

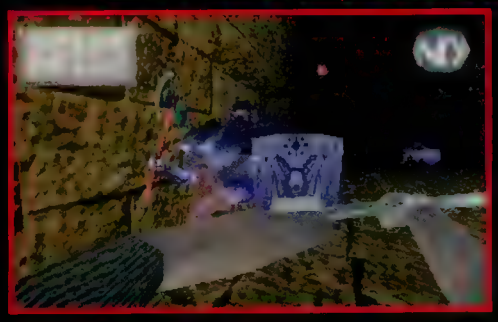
It has been five years since Alexander's victorious return to Verdite Island with the recovered Moonlight Sword. Everything was peaceful until one day, a mysterious thunderstorm formed and a bolt of lightening shattered the tower of the king's castle, breaking the seal holding back the evil within. A new scourge infests the land, taking over everything including the king's mind. Not knowing what to do, and not being able to find the Moonlight Sword that was supposed to be in the castle tower, Alexander seals the castle with the last ounce of his strength in an effort to keep the now corrupted king from destroying the entire island. The only person left who has any hope of doing anything is you, the king's son. Alexander tells you to seek out five different people who hold the powers you need to rid the island of this evil plague. The big problem; you are only seven years old when Alexander tells you what must be done and you won't be able to wield the power until you reach the age of 17. This means ten years of carnage as monsters ravish the lands and the people within. By the time you reach 17 years of age, the seal Alexander put on the castle is weakening and the evil king will be free at any moment. You must hurry to find the five powers, or surely perish.

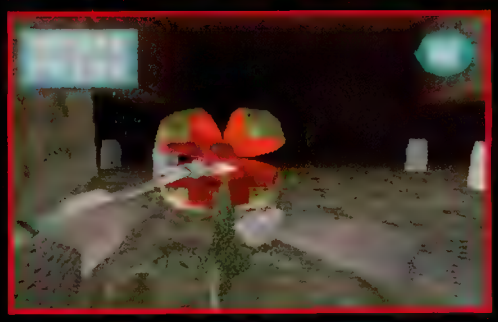
King's Field II brings more of what you loved in the original; more polygons, more textures, more monsters, more adventure, more magic, more special effects, more, more, more. ASCII has granted us a sneak peek of the game in action, and believe you us, it's even better than before.

Tim

EXCLUSIVE

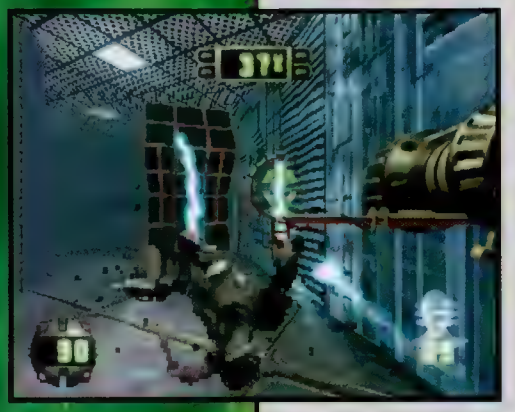
HP220
MP103





DISRUPTOR

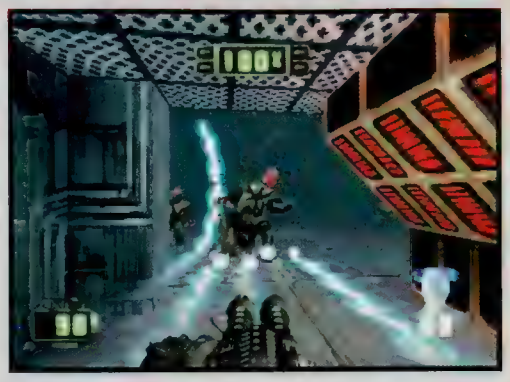
PUBLISHED BY UNIVERSAL — DEVELOPED BY INSOMNIAC GAMES



We started our week at E3 with a visit to Universal Interactive — to tour the Universal Studios, in Universal City, CA, and to take a sneak peek at a new game that they will be bringing to the PlayStation this Fall.

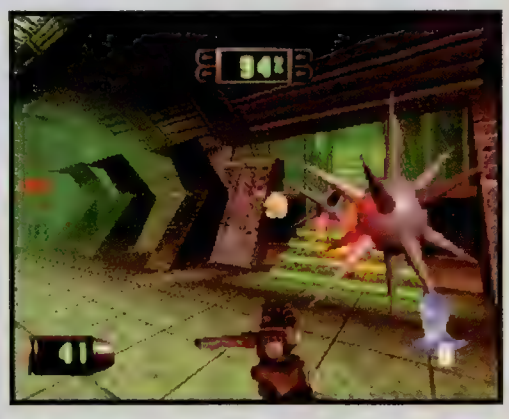
The invitation was an exciting one, not only because we were going to have a chance to hit the Back to the Future ride and see Gilligan's lagoon, but also because we couldn't wait to see what the folks that are responsible for Sony's Crash Bandicoot (in conjunction with developer Naughty Dog) had up their design sleeves — we were not disappointed!

"Disruptor" is the name of their latest work, the first to be published under the Universal Interactive label. This first-person action game takes the tried-and-true formula of Doom



and energizes it with amazing, high-resolution visuals that take the category to a new graphic standard. The game is being developed internally at Universal by Insomniac Games.

The story finds us in the near future, where mankind has established settlements in space. You begin the game as a member of the elite LightStormer troops. In addition to



EXTREME

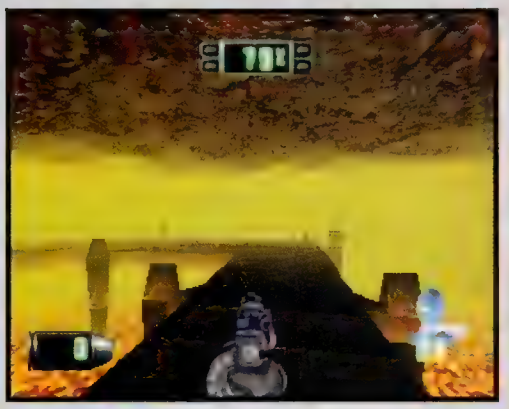
your standard big, big guns and stuff, you are given psychokinetic "enhancements" that allow you to use your mind as a weapon and to heal.

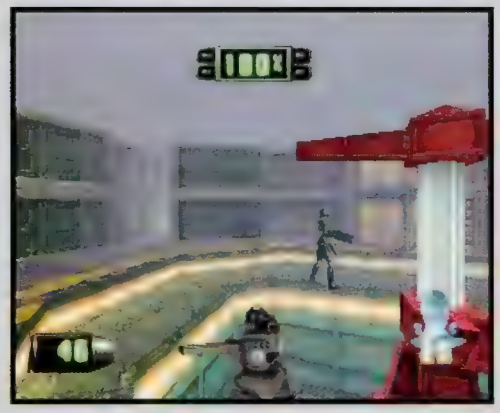
The version of the game that you see before you is pre-Alpha and features three of the 20 areas that will ultimately be in the game. The three levels that we have seen are incredibly different from one another, are very detailed and fast, feature both interior and exterior environments, and are heavily populated, with over 20 enemies per environment. According to Universal's Michael John, one of the areas that they will concentrate the most on is the enemy's artificial intelligence. Enemies will recognize that you are in their area and will chase you from their zones. The design team's overriding goal is to make the game "easy to pick-up — difficult to master."

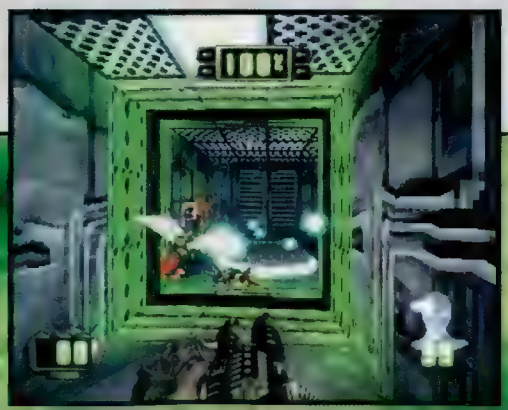
Universal is also planning on taking advantage of their film production expertise to help provide the "glue" for Disruptor's story. They are looking at the game as a science-fiction movie, in which you are the star of the action sequences. The video sequences are being produced by the Universal Television group and they are incorporating a unique feature to keep gamers watching the between-level video. Apparently, if you watch all of the FMV sequences, you will be rewarded with a surprise around level 9.

We are very excited about Disruptor and believe it to be the logical evolution (and graphic revolution) of the first-person action/adventure. We will have more coverage as the game gets closer to completion. It is currently scheduled for a 4th quarter release (probably just before Thanksgiving) at retail.

Dave







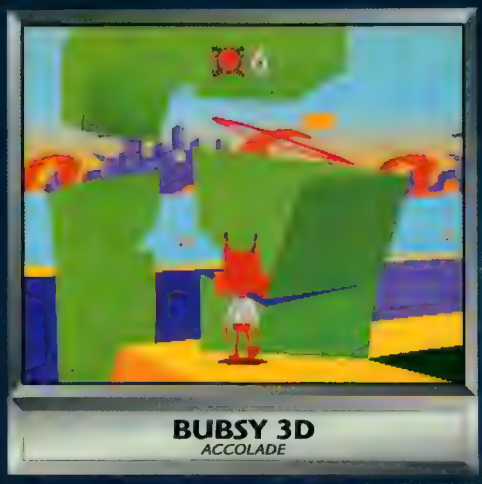
Welcome to our Post E3 Wrap-Up Report. The show, like last year, was a major success, showcasing a tremendous amount of new and innovative PlayStation software. It seemed like almost every publisher exhibiting had one or two PlayStation titles in development – some with a lot more. One thing that was clearly evident to us, was the sheer amount of quality titles in production. Between last issue's "EX*Pecting* at E3" and our E3 Wrap-Up displayed on these next 20 pages, we will have given you a complete and comprehensive glimpse at most of the games you'll be playing this fourth quarter and into next year. The following is a publisher by publisher breakdown of what was on display at the show:

ACCOLADE:

Accolade has big things planned for the PlayStation this Christmas, with numerous titles in the works. Besides the recently shipped PO'ed and HardBall 5, their main focus was **Bubsy 3D**, the logical next-generation extension for the furry bobcat. They also had a unique, 3D battle/sport game titled, **Pit Ball**, developed in the UK. One could compare this to a 3D version of the old Bitmap Bros. Amiga title, SpeedBall. There are currently other titles in the works: a yet untitled **3D Off-Road racer**, the much-anticipated **Star Control 3**, as well as their new sports title, **Legend's Football '97**.

ACCLAIM:

Acclaim, as always, had plenty to offer. Unfortunately, limited space doesn't allow us to show all of the titles, but here is a complete listing: **NBA Jam Extreme** – a port of the new coin-op, **Space Jam** – 3-on-3 B Ball action based on the upcoming Warner Bros. film starring Michael Jordan and the Looney Toons characters, **NFL QB Club '97** – an updated and revamped version of the never-released '96, **WWF: In Your House** – the arcade sequel to the mega-hit WWF Wrestlemania, **Iron Man / X-O Manowar in Heavy Metal** – a sidescroll action/platformer with 3D rendered characters from Marvel and Acclaim Comics, **AD&D's Iron & Blood: Warriors of Ravenloft** – a 3D polygon fighter with a medieval twist, **DragonHeart** – a side-scrolling action game based on the upcoming movie starring Dennis Quaid with the voice of Sean Connery as Drago the Dragon, **The Crow: City of Angels** – a 3D action/adventure comparable to Capcom's Resident Evil, **Frank Thomas Big Hurt Baseball** – what can we say, another 3D baseball title, **Killing Zone** – 3D, one-on-one fighting, monster-style (see last month's EX*Port* for the details), and lastly, **StarFighter, Killing Time** and **BattleSport** – some of Studio 3DO's best titles now headed for the PlayStation (see this month's EX*News* for more info.)



BUBSY 3D
ACCOLADE

BUBSY 3D
ACCOLADE

BUBSY 3D
ACCOLADE

PIT BALL
ACCOLADE

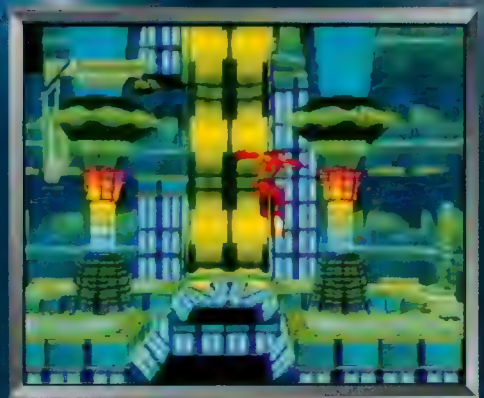
PIT BALL
ACCOLADE

EXPECTING

ELECTRONIC ENTERTAINMENT EXPO E3 LOS ANGELES '96

Report

NFL FULL CONTACT
KONAMI



IRON-MAN, XO MANOWAR
ACCLAIM

IRON-MAN, XO MANOWAR
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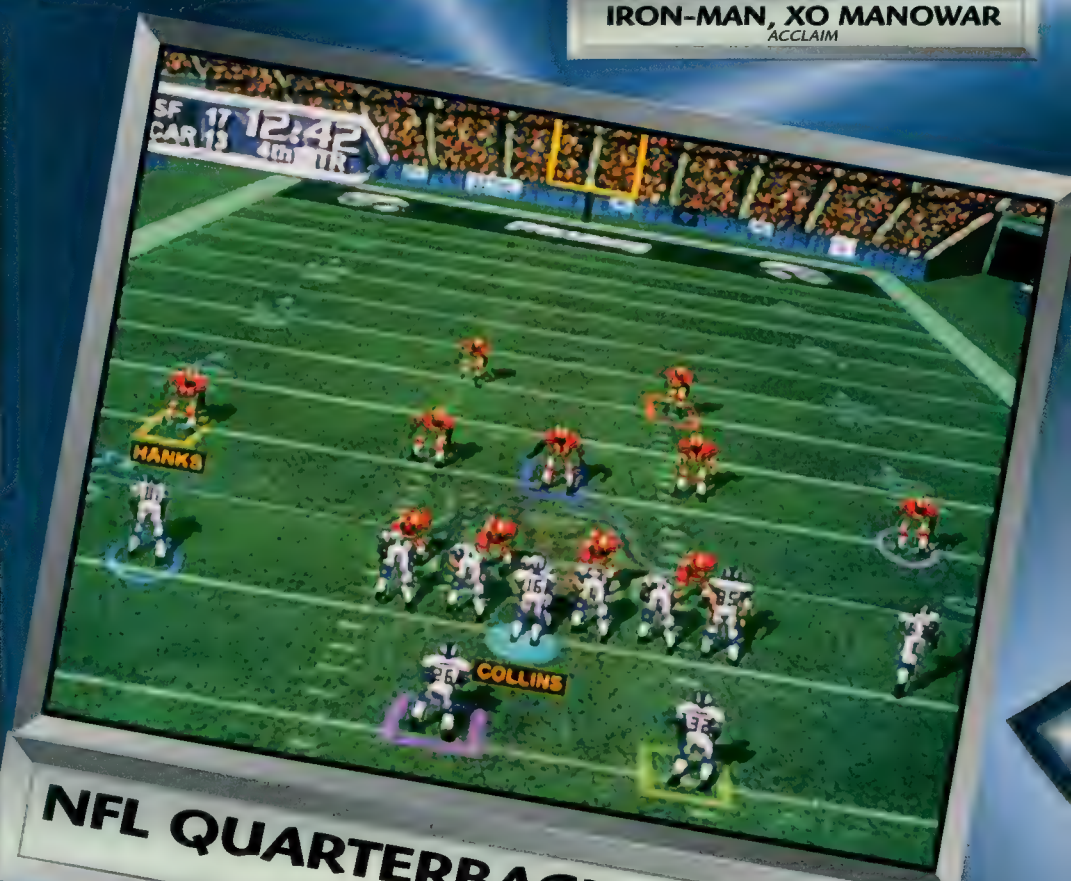
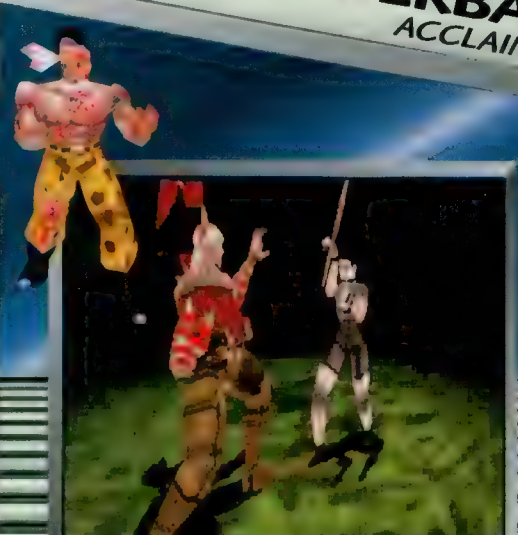
NFL FULL CONTACT
KONAMI



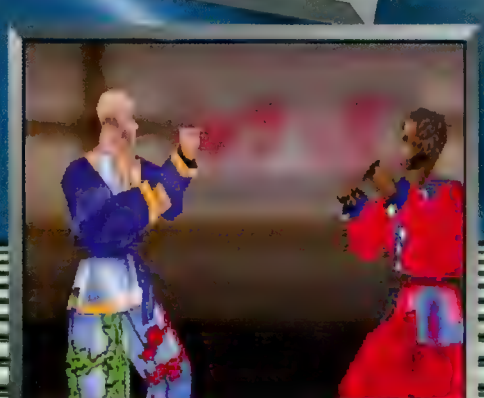
NFL QUARTERBACK CLUB '97
ACCLAIM

BROKEN HELIX
KONAMI

BROKEN HELIX
KONAMI



KUMITE: THE FIGHTERS EDGE
KONAMI



KUMITE: THE FIGHTERS EDGE
KONAMI

KONAMI:
Konami is continuing their strong support of the PlayStation this winter with a wide array of titles planned: **Project Overkill** – a blood and gore isometric shooter, along the lines of Origin's Crusader. **PoliceNauts** – a critically acclaimed, animated RPG that's skewed to an older audience and is the sequel to Snatcher, which showed up on the now-defunct Sega-CD. **Contra : Legacy of War** – 3D Contra, oh my! **Broken Helix** – a twist on the corridor genre by giving you a third/first-person perspective, (see screen-shots on prior page) where the storyline is just as integral as the action. **Crypt Killer** – a port of the horrific coin-op shooter that will be compatible with their new Game Gun peripheral. **Speed King** – a futuristic 3D racing game ported over from their simulator ride (without the simulator, of course.) **Suikoden** – yes, it's true, Konami will be releasing their quality Japanese RPGs over here in America. Suikoden blends 3D and 2D texture-mapped graphics and an immersive story. **Kumite: The Fighter's Edge** – a true-to-life 3D martial arts fighter currently being developed by Bay Area programmers, 47 Tek. And lastly, the XXL Sports Line continues with **NFL Full Contact, NBA In The Zone 2, Int. Track & Field** and **The Final Round Golf**.

ACTIVISION:
Activision is just getting their PlayStation product started, but they should have quite a few titles by the end of the year. Currently in the works are: **Time Commando** – a unique, 3D action/adventure developed by Adeline Software, the originators of the Alone in the Dark series. **HyperBlade** – a futuristic 3D, 2-on-2 roller sport, mixing the sport of hockey and the violence of roller derby inside an enclosed, capsulated arena. And lastly, **Blast Chamber** – a new genre unto itself, best described as a puzzle/action/competition game where you and up to 3 other players battle it out in a series of chambers by blowing each other up ... real good fun!

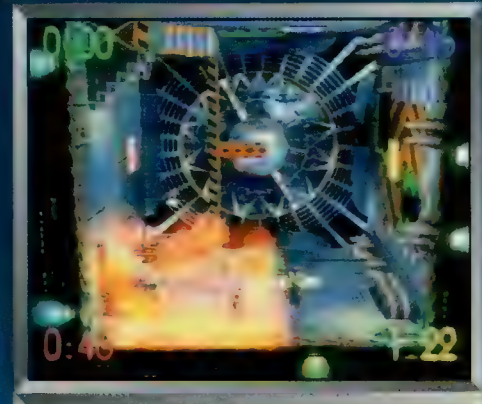
ELECTRONIC ARTS:
EA, as always, has a few tricks up their sleeves, this year was no exception. Besides the mysteriously missing Shred Fest, there was plenty to see. Of their action stuff, **Soviet Strike** stood out by far, looking very promising. Basically, take the game play and mechanics of the earlier 16bit Strike titles, and add the amazing 3D power of the 32bit PlayStation and stand way back! Of course, EA is still Synonymous with sports and this year they did not disappoint. There was an actual playable **Madden 97** – which looks very competitive with the current crop of football titles. **NHL 97** – looking very nice, this could be the definitive hockey title for the rest to beat.

CONTRA: LEGACY OF WAR
KONAMI

CONTRA: LEGACY OF WAR
KONAMI

CONTRA: LEGACY OF WAR
KONAMI

SUIKODEN
KONAMI



BLAST CHAMBER
ACTIVISION

EXPECTING

ELECTRONIC ENTERTAINMENT EXPO E3 LOS ANGELES '96 Report

SYNDICATE WARS
ELECTRONIC ARTS

TIME COMMANDO
ACTIVISION

TIME COMMANDO
ACTIVISION

SYNDICATE WARS
ELECTRONIC ARTS

TIME COMMANDO
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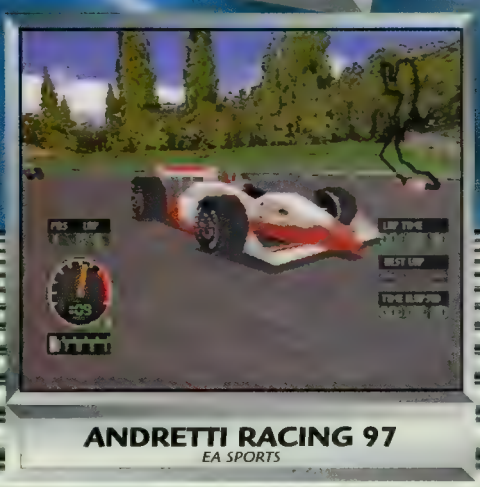
SOVIET STRIKE
ELECTRONIC ARTS

SOVIET STRIKE
ELECTRONIC ARTS

ANDRETTI RACING 97
EA SPORTS



ANDRETTI RACING 97
EA SPORTS

ELECTRONIC ARTS (cont'd.)
Next, there was **Mario Andretti Racing 97** – even at its early state (2 months into the production cycle), it looked very nice. With both F1 and Stock Car racing, this title should give Psygnosis' upcoming F1 Racer a run for their money. EA also had **PGA Tour 97** – sporting 2 new prestigious championship courses, TPC Sawgrass and The Links at Spanish Bay, and plenty of new features like picture-in-picture views, real-time shot previews and improved artificial intelligence. Lastly, Bullfrog was showing **Syndicate Wars** – a real-time 3D, strategy/simulation with insanely deep and challenging game play.

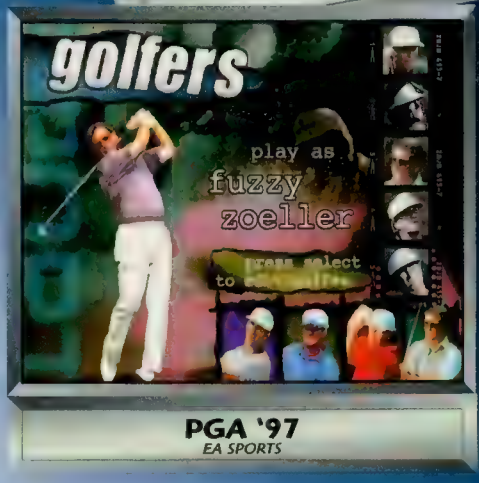
GTE ENTERTAINMENT:
GTE Entertainment is bringing to life the comic book inspired, **Hard Boiled: Nixon's Revenge** – this will be GTE's first foray into PlayStation gaming and is an action/adventure title which features incredibly fast, real time 3D arcade style game play. Hard Boiled is based on the Dark Horse comics of the same name, written by famous author, Frank Miller.

LUCASARTS:
The excitement is building at LucasArts, as they are set to launch a number of titles for the PlayStation this Fall. Building on their tremendous success with the PC, the following titles will be hitting the retail shelves, pronto. **Rebel Assault 2** – this 3D live action thriller features the first new Star Wars footage since "Return of The Jedi". A first look at the show has everyone waiting breathlessly. **Dark Forces** – this PC smash is long overdue on the PlayStation. Take on the role of Kyle Kitarin and defeat the Empire's latest scheme via 3D corridor action. We can't wait for this one either. **Myth Adventures** – reminiscent of LucasArts earlier 16 bit title, "Zombies Ate My Neighbors", this updated toga party allows 2 players to rumble with the likes of mythical creature, gods, and various other Herculean-type bad guys. **Ballblazer Champions** – this is a 90's update of the classic Atari 5200 game. This time, you're doing battle in a futuristic arena, offering amazing real-time 3D graphics. If the traffic around LucasArts' booth was any indication, these games should be huge.

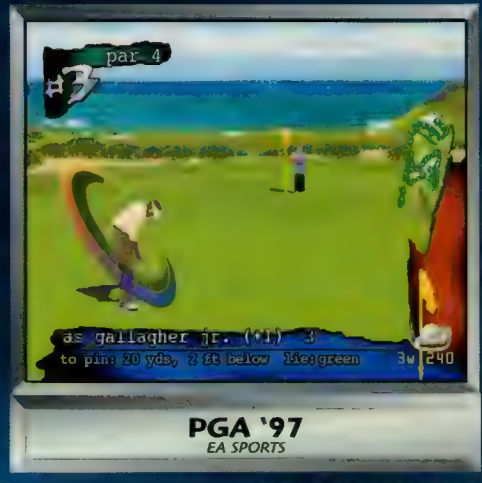
MADDEN '97
EA SPORTS

MADDEN '97
EA SPORTS

MADDEN '97
EA SPORTS



PGA '97
EA SPORTS

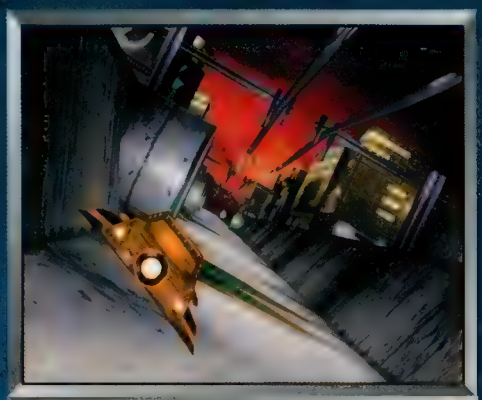


PGA '97
EA SPORTS

HARD BOILED
GTE

NHL '97
EA SPORTS

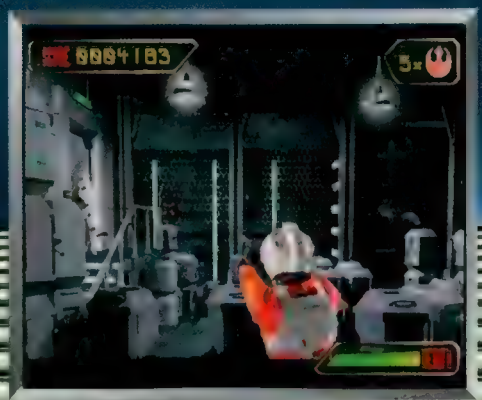
NHL '97
EA SPORTS



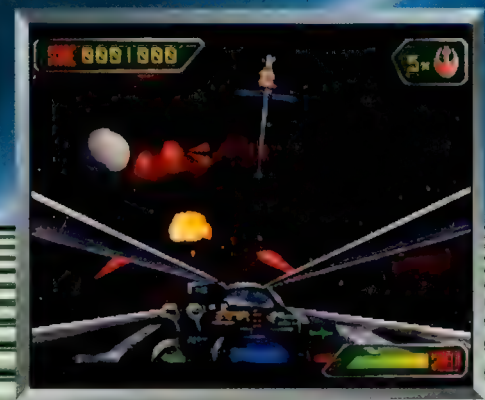
HARD BOILED
GTE

NHL '97
EA SPORTS

HARD BOILED
GTE



REBEL ASSAULT 2
LUCASARTS



REBEL ASSAULT 2
LUCASARTS

REBEL ASSAULT 2
LUCASARTS

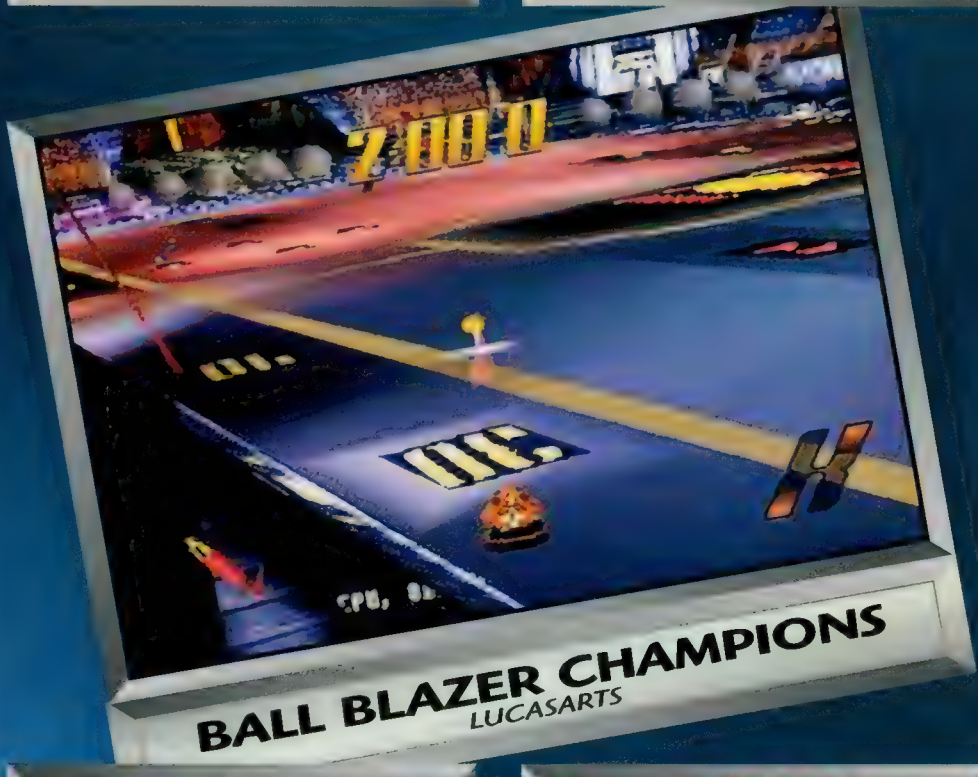
PHILIPS MEDIA:
Philips Media has a couple of interesting upcoming titles. The first, **Down in The Dumps** – a point-and-click adventure title that has you searching the dumps you've just crashed into for spare parts for your rocket ship. Packed with humor and comedy, Down in The Dumps promises to deliver in the game play category as well. Developed by HaiKu studios, the game is flush with multiple levels, and fully rendered characters throughout. Philips second title comes by way of Cranberry Source. **Q.A.D.** (Quintessential Art of Destruction) – is a very fast 3D shooter using voxel generated terrain and bit-mapped graphics. Judging from the collective talents of the developers, we should be in for a treat.

BMG INTERACTIVE:
BMG's first title for the PlayStation comes via Boss game studios, and is titled **Spider**. Spider enslaves you inside the body of a cybernetic tarantula, where you travel through 6 different 3D real-world environments searching for the kidnappers of your human body through 30 enemy-infested levels. **Mass Destruction** – your mission, simply put, is to annihilate the enemy. Well, with a title like this, I hardly expected any thing less. The gamer will have total unrestricted access to what can only be described as a "Weapons R Us" inventory to destroy the enemy. Thankfully, they've included a flame thrower, which happens to be my weapon of choice.

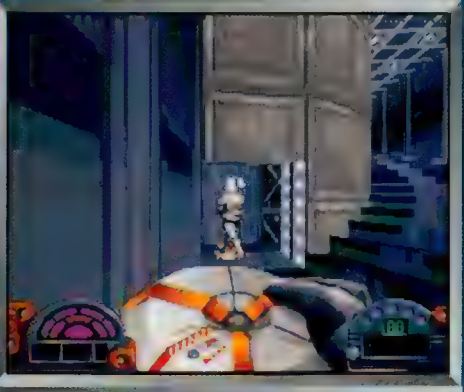
MICROPROSE:
Microprose is continuing their PlayStation development with a new title, **GunShip** – a true flight sim, Gunship promises to be a sim-lover's dream. Most of the flight based titles of late have been true arcade-style shooters. GunShip, however, was designed to appeal to an older user. Based on our first look at the show, we think it should please even the most fanatical shoot 'em up fan. **Vette** – this first-person 3D driving game was originally released for the Mac back in the early 90's. Basically, all we know is that you're behind the wheel of a vintage Corvette screaming around the streets of San Francisco. That's enough to get my interest peaked, let's hope that it translates better for the PlayStation than it did for the Mac.

MYTH ADVENTURES
LUCASARTS

MYTH ADVENTURES
LUCASARTS



BALL BLAZER CHAMPIONS
LUCASARTS



DARK FORCES
LUCASARTS

DARK FORCES
LUCASARTS

EXPECTING

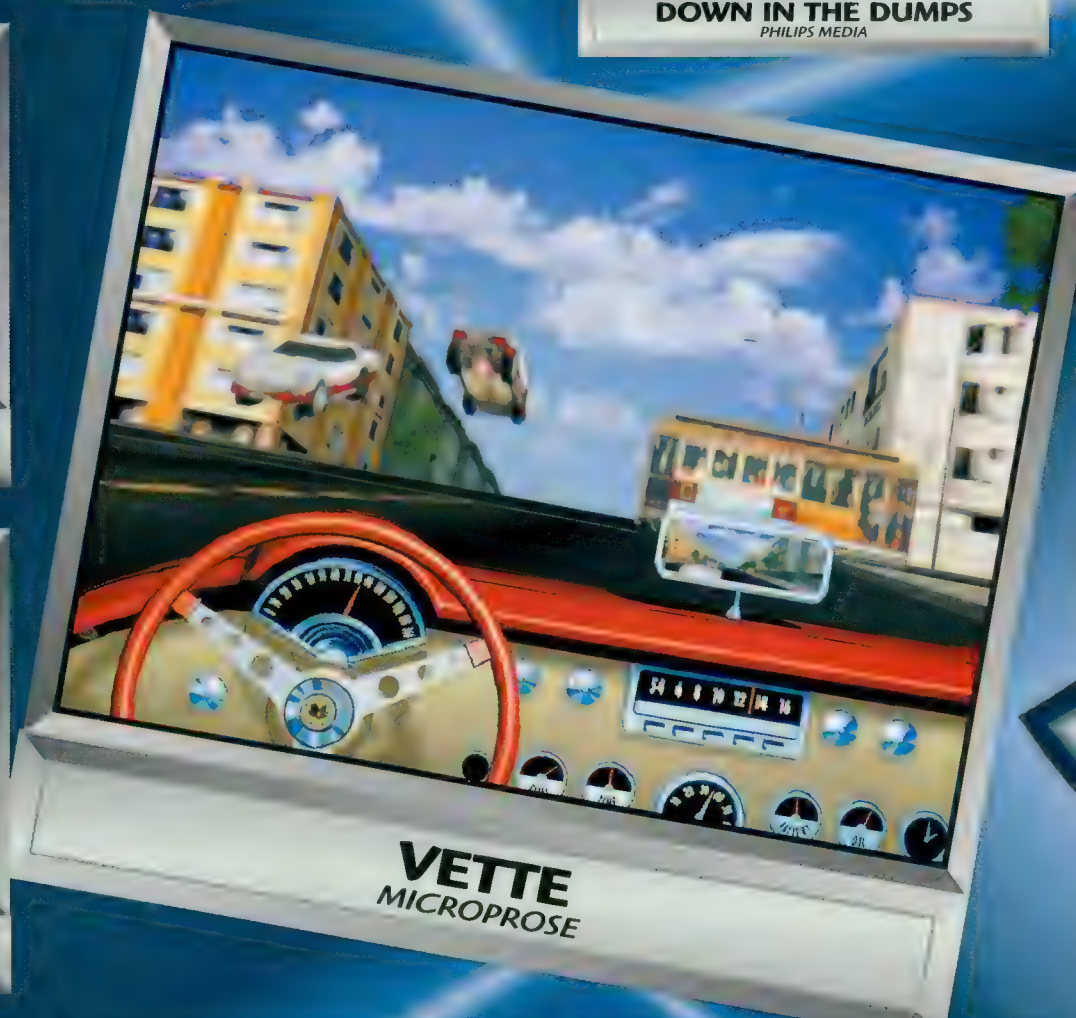
ELECTRONIC ENTERTAINMENT EXPO E3 LOS ANGELES '96 Report

MASS DESTRUCTION
BMG

Q.A.D.
PHILIPS MEDIA

DOWN IN THE DUMPS
PHILIPS MEDIA

MASS DESTRUCTION
BMG



VETTE
MICROPROSE

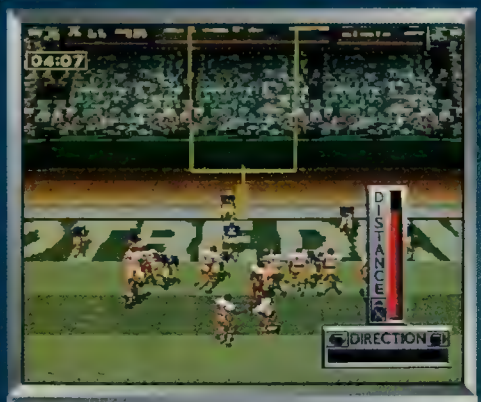
SPIDER
BMG

SPIDER
BMG

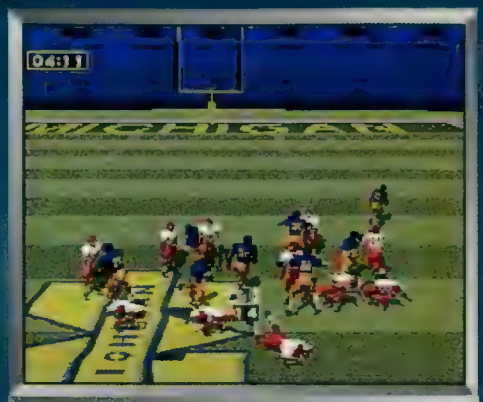
GUNSHIP
MICROPROSE

GUNSHIP
MICROPROSE

SONY:
Sony's booth was literally bursting at the seams, as one would expect, with literally hundreds of TV's showing off playable versions of their upcoming new titles. Again, there's not enough space and too many games to show, so we will list more titles than there are accompanying screen-shots. We promise to have plenty more previews of these titles in upcoming issues.
First there was **Crash Bandicoot** – easily one of the best titles at the Show this year, combining near-perfect game play with eye-popping, 3D visuals. It's a shame we can't go more in-depth this issue, but, look for extended coverage, as Crash is our cover story in next month's issue. Next there was **Twisted Metal 2: World Tour** – Once again, SingleTrac delivers. In TM2, drivers with a death-wish take to the streets, this time all around the world, in more of the insane, fierce driving combat we've come to expect. There was **Jet Moto** – another SingleTrac title where you control an all-terrain jet-bike in a race against others and the clock across ocean, snow, ice, muddy swamps and more - all in 3D, of course. The physics behind this one are spot-on and this could shape up to be a great Winter title. **Tobal #1** was a surprise to many. Square's first PlayStation game and it's not an RPG but a 3D fighter! Who knew? This game is incredibly fluid and smooth, running at a steady 60 fps. It looks like Sony will be publishing SNK's PlayStation titles and the first are: **King Of Fighters, Real Bout Fatal Fury** and **Samurai Shodown 3: Blades of Blood**. They look to be identical ports of the NEO GEO versions. Here's a quick list of the rest of the titles shown: **MLB Pennant Race** – as seen in May's cover story, **2 Xtreme** – the sequel to ESPN Extreme games, **NCAA GameBreaker Football** – GameDay with college players, **NHL Face Off '97**, **Beyond the Beyond** – Sony's first RPG, which should be shipping any day now, **Tunnel B-1** – originally an Ocean title, now picked up by Sony (see May's EX*Pecting* for the details), **Epidemic** – originally Kileak the Blood 2 in Japan, and thankfully renamed for the American market. This 3D corridor shooter features a silky-smooth 3D engine and beautifully rendered cut-scenes. **Horned Owl** – the first shooter to hit the market in conjunction with Konami's Game Gun peripheral and lastly, **Spawn** – based on Todd McFarlane's popular comic book series and action figures. There's not much to say about this title yet, other than the game play is completely in 3D. Let's hope it's better than the SNES version.



NCAA GAMEBREAKER
SONY



NCAA GAMEBREAKER
SONY

JET MOTO
SONY

JET MOTO
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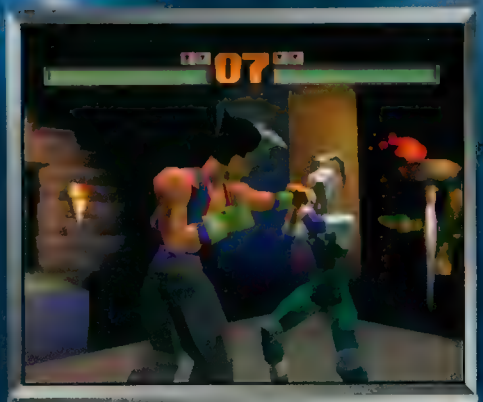
JET MOTO
SONY

TWISTED METAL 2
SONY



TOBAL # 1
SONY/SQUARE

TOBAL # 1
SONY/SQUARE

TWISTED METAL 2
SONY

CRASH BANDICOOT
SONY/UNIVERSAL

TWISTED METAL 2
SONY

TWISTED METAL 2
SONY

TOBAL #1
SONY/SQUARE

TOBAL #1
SONY/SQUARE

PSYGNOSIS:
Without a doubt, the most interesting booth at E3 was Psygnosis. With close to 100 TV's positioned to create a large tire-like tunnel, their upcoming title, Formula 1 caught more than its' fair share of attention. Psygnosis had a virtual cornucopia of new products at the show; the following are for the PlayStation. **Formula 1** – this arcade-style simulation is actually based on the 1995 Formula 1 racing season. With official FOCA/FIA licenses, Psygnosis is set to take the winner's circle.
Destruction Derby 2 – obviously, the sequel to the very successful title, Destruction Derby, DD2 will feature a wild collision course with advanced 3D physics and graphics. This time there the cars will actually flip and catch air, creating even more realistic crashes and accidents. **Wipeout XL** – yet another sequel from Psygnosis, WipeOut XL attempts to take you to the next level. Should be an interesting ride. **Monster Truck Rally** – this title got a ton of attention at the show, and believe me, I was one of the adoring throng. MT Rally is an action-packed off-road racer that has you blasting through the desert in a baja buggy, or making beer cans out of parked cars. **Adidas Power Soccer** – this latest soccer sim has you competing against Europe's finest via 3D action, all the way to the European Cup. **Tenka** – this first-person, 3D shooter promises to redefine the genre. Don't be fooled by overused words, this game should blow your collective socks off. **The City of Lost Children** – based on the European movie of the same name, this adventure game attempts to make puzzle solving lovers out of all of us. **Discworld II** – this comedy-based, point-and-click sequel, attempts to blend the old with the new. The old being very addictive game play, along with the new, very cool graphics. **Chronicles of The Sword** – Based in the era of Camelot (no, not the Kennedy administration) and the Knights of The Round Table, this epic adventure title should be the point-and-click game to watch for. **Alphastorm** – this action packed thriller drops you into the war-torn universe of battling starships, where you must save the galaxy from evil pirates. **Athanor** – we don't know much, but it looks pretty cool. **Sentient** – the PlayStation will be getting a number of role playing games this year, Sentient looks to be one of the better ones.
The Adventures of Lomax in Lemmingland – This 2D side scroller is a total departure from the original Lemmings theme. It looks very cool though!

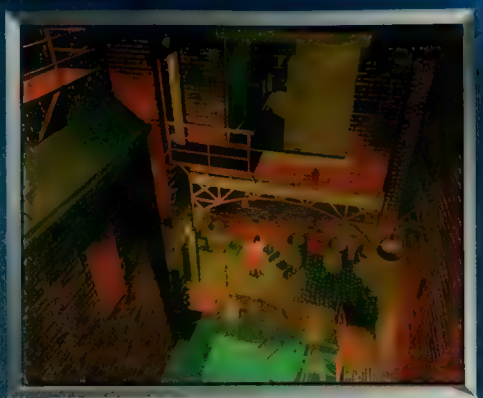
DISCWORLD 2
PSYGNOSIS

DESTRUCTION DERBY 2
PSYGNOSIS

DESTRUCTION DERBY 2
PSYGNOSIS

FORMULA 1
PSYGNOSIS

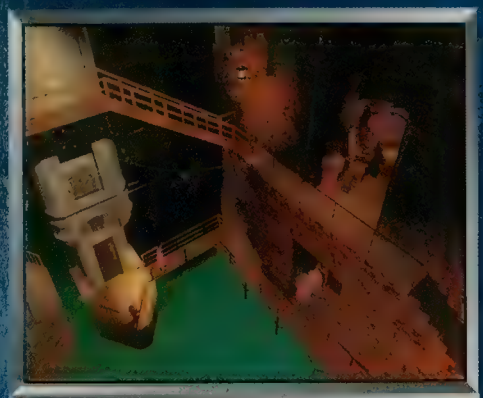
FORMULA 1
PSYGNOSIS



CITY OF THE LOST CHILDREN
PSYGNOSIS

WIPEOUT XL
PSYGNOSIS

WIPEOUT XL
PSYGNOSIS



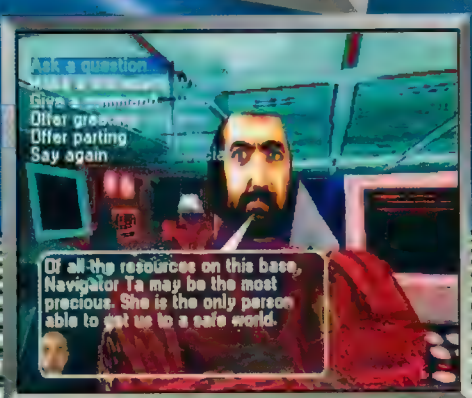
CITY OF THE LOST CHILDREN
PSYGNOSIS

WIPEOUT XL
PSYGNOSIS

ATHANOR
PSYGNOSIS

ATHANOR
PSYGNOSIS

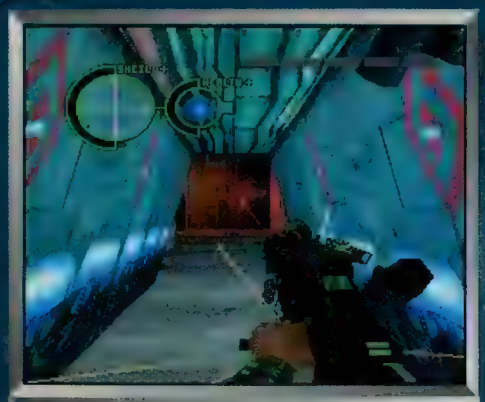
SENTIENT
PSYGNOSIS


Ask a question
Give a
Offer greeting
Offer parting
Say again
Of all the resources on this base, Navigator Ta may be the most precious. She is the only person able to get us to a safe world.

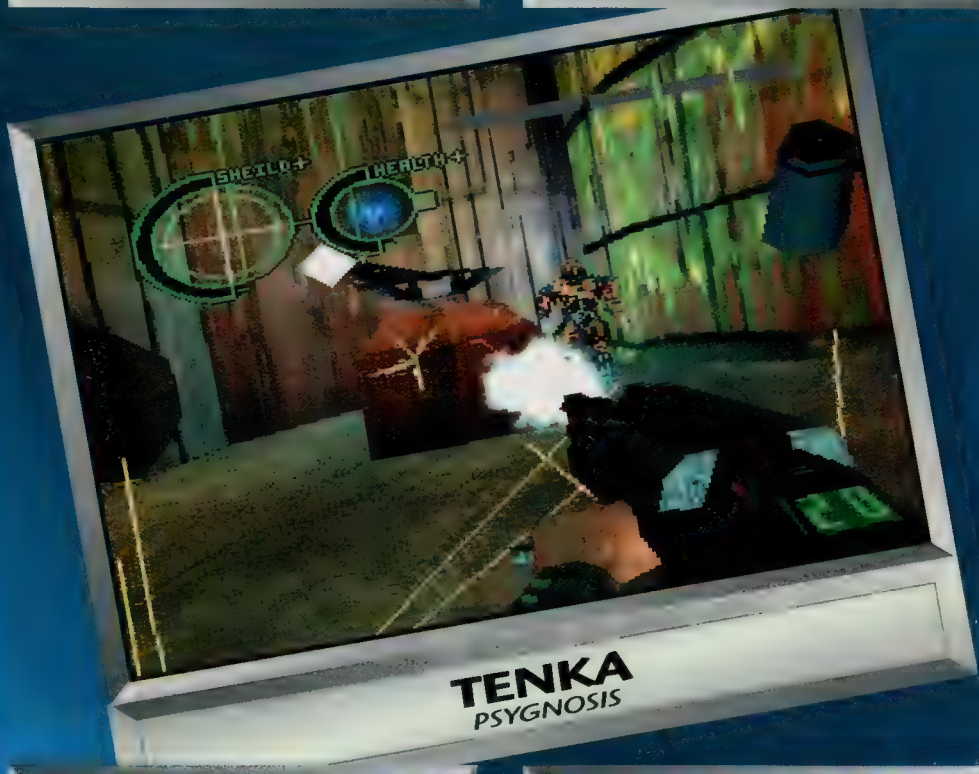
SENTIENT
PSYGNOSIS

EIDOS INTERACTIVE:
(Formerly known as US Gold and Domark)
The acquisition of US Gold by Domark has led to the creation of Eidos Interactive, and boy do they have some product ready to go. First, in no particular order, is **Swagman** – this 3D action/adventure title with incredibly smooth animation has you controlling unruly twins living in a nightmare world. It's a race against time, and looks pretty fun at this point. Look for a full review later this year. **The Incredible Hulk** – no need to lay this story out, let's just say, the big green guy goes 3D. Hulk is a 32bit extension of US Gold's earlier SNES and Genesis versions. **Machine Head** – this action-adventure based Core design has you strapped to a huge smart bomb, racing against time to rid the world of a homebrew, life mutating supervirus. It could happen. **Dream Team Basketball** – no introductions necessary here either. You get to play with the Dream Team. Are you up to the challenge? This title, to our surprise, is comprised of bitmapped sprites, not 3D polys. The verdict is out until it's done. Last but not least, **Tomb Raider** – our vote for one the top games at the show. Previewed way back in April, this title is already a contender for 3D action/adventure game of the year!

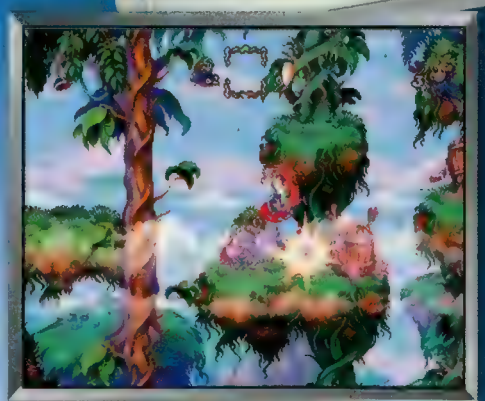
VIACOM:
Viacom is entering the PlayStation market with a few interesting new titles. First, **MTV's Aeon Flux** – you guessed it, you become Peter Cheung's psycho-seductive spy of MTV's animated series. You will enter a first-person world where your mission is to capture the Demiurge, a supernatural being with the power to turn everybody into fanatics (Like we aren't already.)
Second, is **MTV's Slamscape** – Viacom attempts to combine the MTV music world with a pretty unique driving/shooter. This soundtrack-based game is set for a fourth quarter release. Third and lastly, is **The Divide: Enemies Within** – this 3D action/platform shooter catapults you onto a frozen planet where you must battle your way past a variety of very unique 3D creatures, through 9 different levels.


TENKA
PSYGNOSIS

TENKA
PSYGNOSIS



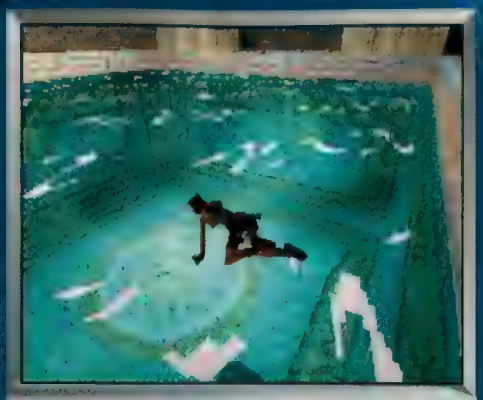
TENKA
PSYGNOSIS


THE ADVENTURES OF LOMAX IN LEMMINGLAND
PSYGNOSIS

THE ADVENTURES OF LOMAX IN LEMMINGLAND
PSYGNOSIS

EXPECTING

ELECTRONIC ENTERTAINMENT EXPO E3 LOS ANGELES '96 Report



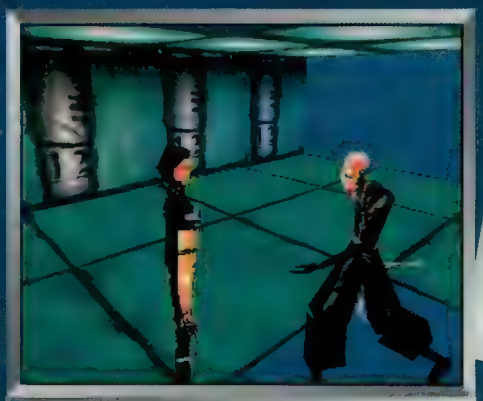
TOMB RAIDER
EIDOS

MTV'S SLAMSCAPE
VIACOM

MTV'S SLAMSCAPE
VIACOM

TOMB RAIDER
EIDOS

MTV'S SLAMSCAPE
VIACOM



MTV'S AEON FLUX
VIACOM

MTV'S AEON FLUX
VIACOM

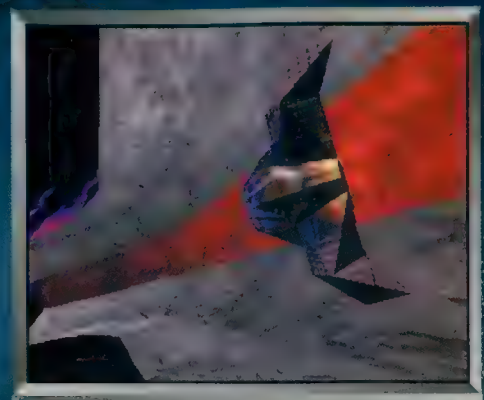
THE DIVIDE: ENEMIES WITHIN
VIACOM

THE DIVIDE: ENEMIES WITHIN
VIACOM

MINDSCAPE:
Mindscape has been a little slow getting their product to market lately, but just as they're getting ready to ship their current crop of releases (Steel Harbinger, Raven Project and Warhammer: Shadow of the Horned Rat), new product is already on the horizon. The PlayStation games on display were few, but there are many in the works: First there's a **Marvel 2099** title – Mindscape has teamed up with Marvel to bring you a side-scrolling action game with the comic book characters from the 2099 series. There's **Starwinder** – a high-speed racing game where you compete against the Galaxy's best pilots in the newly discovered Earth. This high speed racer has you jetting down tracks in the outer reaches of the atmosphere. Next, **Supersonic Racers** – a comical racer, aimed at kids of all ages, developed by the folks that brought us the Genesis classic, MicroMachines. This 3D cartoon-style driver has addiction written all over it. Besides great action titles, Mindscape is hoping to capitalize on the large sports enthusiast market with their new brand of sports titles: **MSA** (Mindscape Sports Authority). The first titles out will be the major 4: **Aaron vs. Ruth: All-Time Superstars Baseball** – harkening back to the good old days of baseball, where you can manage your own grand-slam dream team, captained by Hank Aaron or Babe Ruth. **Mindscape Golf** – featuring a unique twist on the game by offering a fantasy course composed of spectacular, perilously challenging holes. **NCAA Football: Saturday Showdown** – another addition to the PlayStation's growing library. Saturday Showdown will feature 3D play as well as both coaching and arcade modes. **NCAA Basketball: Final Four '97** – combines true 3D players and motion capture technology with real offensive and defensive strategies.

TECMO:
Famous for their Super Bowl series, Tecmo had a couple of surprises at the show: **Tecmo Super Bowl** – TSB goes 32bit, PlayStation style! This perennial crowd pleaser is positioned to take a major swipe at Sony's own GameDay. **Stackers** – a Tetris / Puyo Puyo clone, that takes advantage of the PlayStation's awesome capabilities. **Monster Farm** – having many similarities to EA's computer game Mail Order Monsters, Monster Farm has you rolling your own monsters and then pitting them against each other in deadly, 3D battles. **Thoroughbred Racing** – a very cool-looking horse racing game, where you actually are competing as the jockey. Let's hope it gets approved. And lastly, **Castle of the Damned** – you take the evil side in this RPG. Your mission is to serve up unsuspecting good guys to your master.

STARWINDER
MINDSCAPE



STARWINDER
MINDSCAPE

SUPERSONIC RACERS
MINDSCAPE

SUPERSONIC RACERS
MINDSCAPE

SUPERSONIC RACERS
MINDSCAPE

EXPECTING

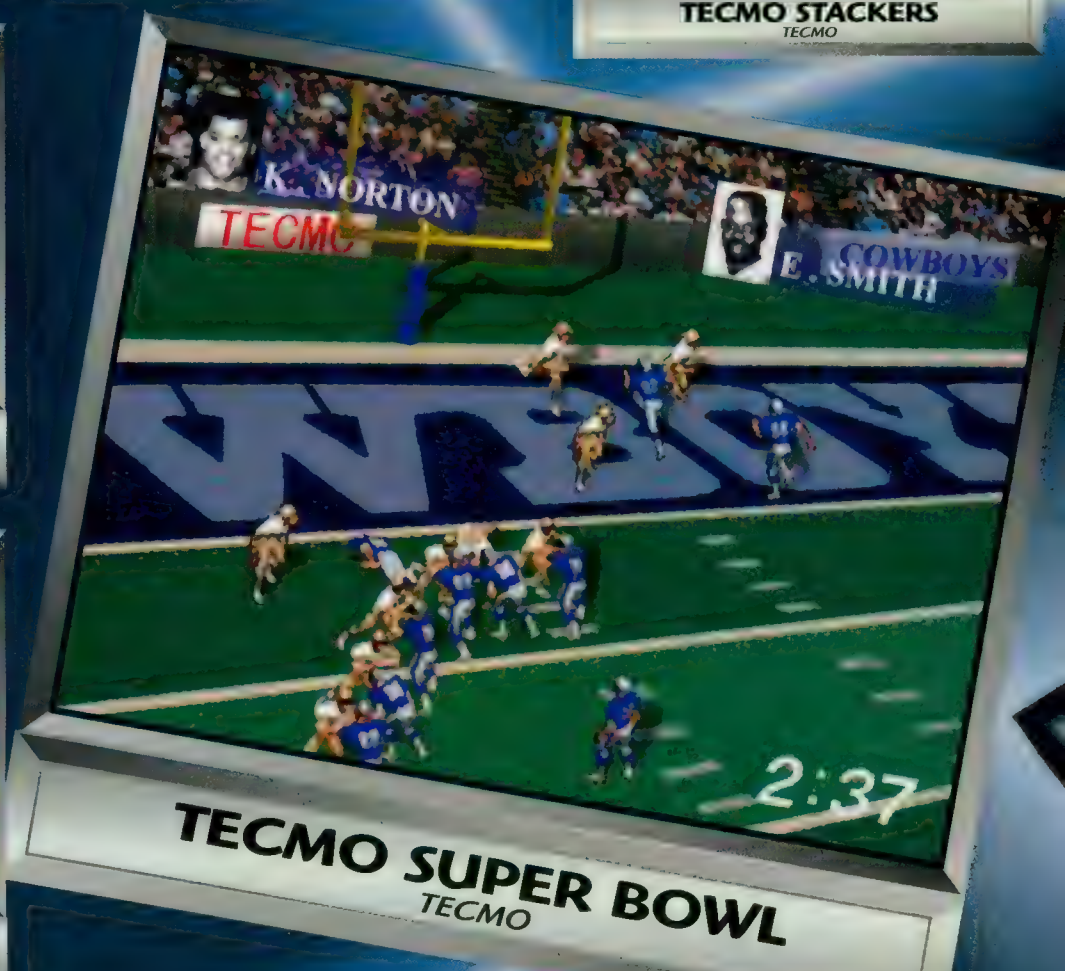
ELECTRONIC ENTERTAINMENT EXPO E3 LOS ANGELES '96 Report

THOROUGHBRED DERBY
TECMO

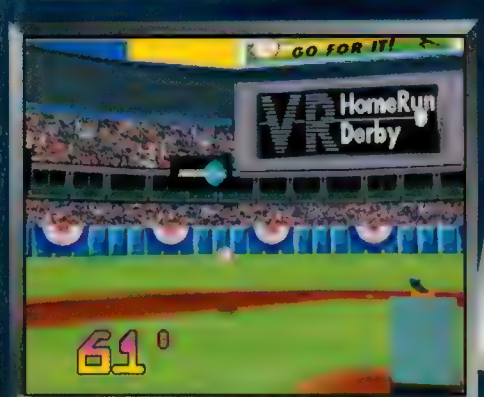
CASTLE OF THE DAMNED
TECMO

TECMO STACKERS
TECMO

MONSTER FARM
TECMO



TECMO SUPER BOWL
TECMO



VR HOME RUN DERBY
INTERACTIVE LIGHT

VR HOME RUN DERBY
INTERACTIVE LIGHT

GRID RUNNER
VIRGIN

GRID RUNNER
VIRGIN

INTERACTIVE LIGHT:
This newcomer will offer a unique baseball simulator/batting peripheral and software package titled, **VR Home Run Derby.** The unit looks like a base with infra-red tracking lights affixed to it and accurately measures swing and velocity. It should be available by Christmas or early next year.

VIRGIN INTERACTIVE:
Virgin is quickly becoming a powerhouse for PlayStation development. With a new brand for their in-house programming teams titled Burst, they are literally "Bursting" onto the 32bit console scene with some hands-down quality software. Just check out these new titles: **Nanotek Warrior** – a 3D shooter looking like a mix of classic and contemporary game design. We all agree this title reminds us a little bit of Gyruss mixed-in with some Stun Runner...very cool. **Grand Slam '96** – another on-the-fly, 3D-modeled baseball game for the PlayStation. At this stage in development, there's not too much to report, other than it has the MLBPA license and uses a mixture of texture-mapped polygons and motion captured sprites. Can we ever have too much of a good thing? **Spot Goes to Hollywood** – a long and challenging, isometric action/platformer starring the little red bottle cap himself (see last issue's EX*Pecting* at E3 for more). **Golden Nugget** – Playstation goes Las Vegas. "Viva Las Vegas" as the saying goes, I for one am looking forward to this game. Look for the underlying full motion video story featuring the original campy Caped Crusader, Adam West himself. Into '97 Virgin will continue on strong with a top-secret title called **Propaganda** as well as **Escape From LA** – based on the upcoming Christmas sequel starring Snake Pliskin himself, Kurt Russell.

AMERICAN SOFTWORKS:
As stated in last month's E3 Preview, ASC has a plethora of quality PlayStation product readying for release this fourth quarter and we certainly will have plenty of coverage in the upcoming months. The 2 that were furthest along of the bunch were: **Hardcore 4x4** (shown on the right of this page) and **Perfect Weapon**. Hardcore 4x4 is designed to mimic the physics of real off-road racing, with vehicles reacting just as they would in real environmental conditions. **Perfect Weapon** pits the player in a true 3D environment with gorgeous graphics and incredible play mechanics. The game is a mixture of fighting and exploring, literally creating its own genre.

INTERPLAY:
Interplay is continuing its support for the PlayStation with plenty of new softs this year as well.

(continues)

NANOTEK WARRIOR
VIRGIN

NANOTEK WARRIOR
VIRGIN

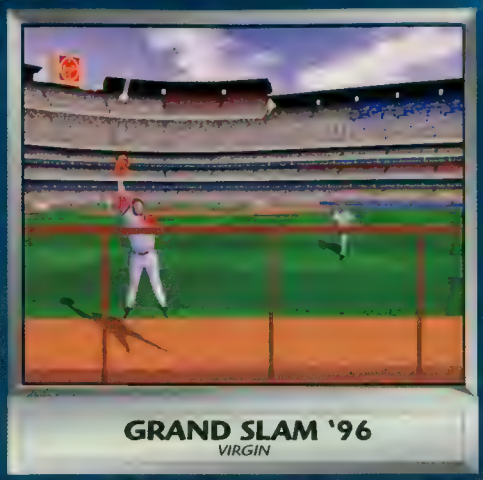
NANOTEK WARRIOR
VIRGIN

GOLDEN NUGGET
VIRGIN

GOLDEN NUGGET
VIRGIN

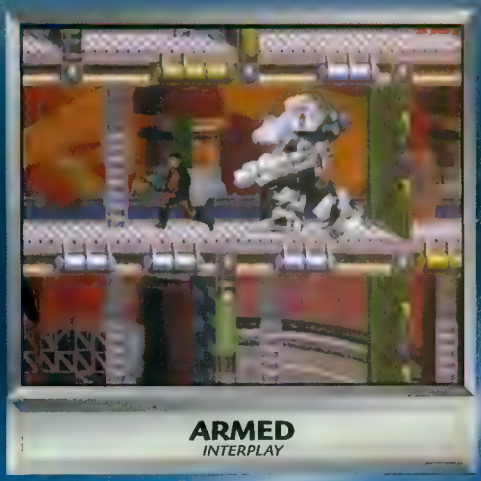
ELECTRONIC ENTERTAINMENT EXPO E3 LOS ANGELES '96

EXPECTING Report

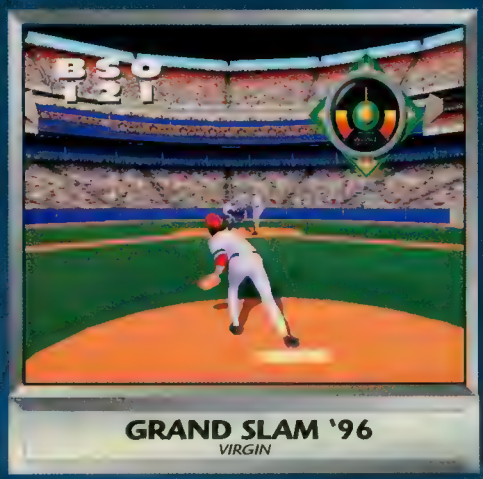


GRAND SLAM '96
VIRGIN

ARMED
INTERPLAY



ARMED
INTERPLAY



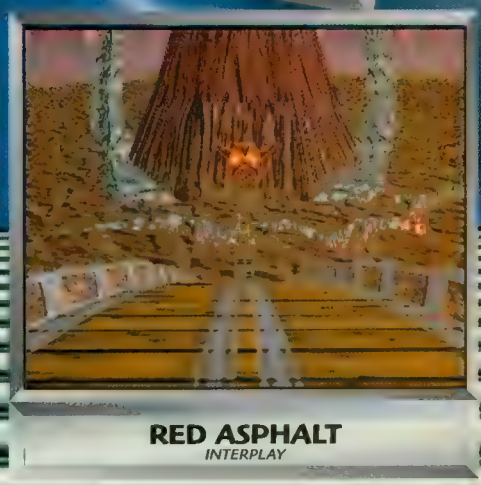
GRAND SLAM '96
VIRGIN

RED ASPHALT
INTERPLAY

HARDCORE 4x4
AMERICAN SOFTWORKS

HARDCORE 4x4
AMERICAN SOFTWORKS

RED ASPHALT
INTERPLAY



RED ASPHALT
INTERPLAY

INTERPLAY(cont'd)
There's **Armed** – a side-scrolling action title blending SGI-rendered characters, backgrounds and cut-scenes with a post-apocalyptic atmosphere. **Red Asphalt: Rock 'n Roll Racing 2** – the logical 32bit sequel to a great 16bit game. This racer will feature striking 3D tracks, blazing competition and plenty of the offbeat characters and humor found in the first. **Casper the Friendly Ghost** – a puzzle/action title being developed in Norway that was supposed to be released early in '96. (Maybe they're driving it over in a van.) **Tempest 2000** – yes, the 90's revamp of the 80's arcade classic is making its way to the PlayStation this fall. Continuing their VR Sports line-up, **VR Baseball** is being developed in-house, and hopefully shipping in time for the World Series.

GT INTERACTIVE:
GT will be producing some hot PS titles in '96 including: **Hexen** – the mega-popular sword and sorcery first person shooter utilizing a newer version of the Doom engine. **Gender Wars** – a mission-based action/strategy game that gives literal meaning to the term "battle of the sexes". **Bedlam** – a 3D, top-down, arcade strategy/shooter where you embark on deadly missions to rid mankind of hostile aliens. **Tiger Shark** – looking to be the SubRoc of the 90's. **Duke Nukem 3D** – oh yeah! This is the mother of all first person shooters and we get it for the PlayStation this Fall, life is damn good! But wait, there's more! **Quake** is coming in 1997, need we say more?

WILLIAMS:
Because of space constraints, we only have room for shots of one Williams title (**Robotron X**). Also coming from Williams are: **Open-Ice, Mortal Kombat Trilogy, Final Doom, War Gods, NBA Hang-Time, Area 51, Wayne Gretzky Hockey** and believe us, plenty more surprises to come.

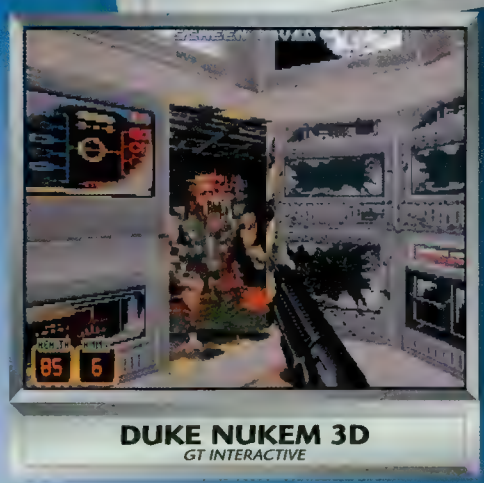
CRYSTAL DYNAMICS:
Crystal had a strong trio of games on display at the show, which include: **Legacy of Kain** – the much anticipated and talked about blood-sucking overhead adventure game from Canadian-based, Silicon Nights. **3D Baseball** – looking and playing very nicely, sporting a great 3D engine and clean texture-mapped polygons. And, of course, **Pandemonium** – the amazing 3D side-scroller that has to be seen in motion to be believed (also the object of last month's cover story in EX*Treme*).

AMERICAN LASER GAMES:
ALG has one PS title in development this year titled, **Shining Sword**. This game will combine a proprietary 3D engine, lots of exploring, and plenty of one-on-one fighting.

HEXEN
GT INTERACTIVE

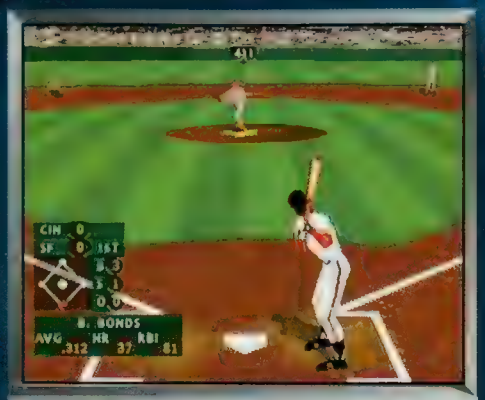
HEXEN
GT INTERACTIVE

DUKE NUKEM 3D
GT INTERACTIVE



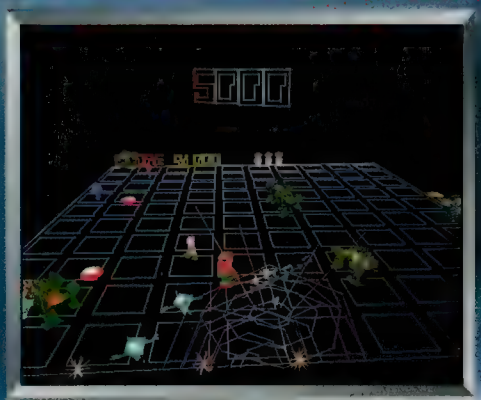
DUKE NUKEM 3D
GT INTERACTIVE

DUKE NUKEM 3D
GT INTERACTIVE



3D BASEBALL
CRYSTAL DYNAMICS

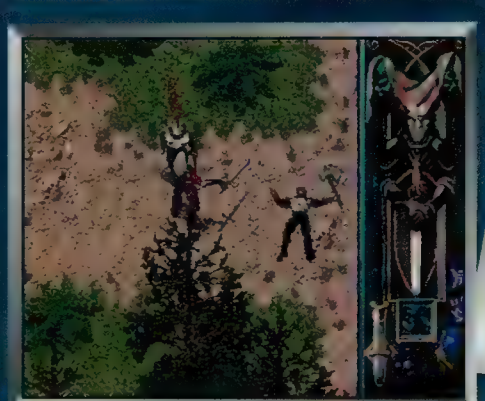
ROBOTRON X
WILLIAMS



ROBOTRON X
WILLIAMS

3D BASEBALL
CRYSTAL DYNAMICS

ROBOTRON X
WILLIAMS



LEGACY OF KAIN
CRYSTAL DYNAMICS

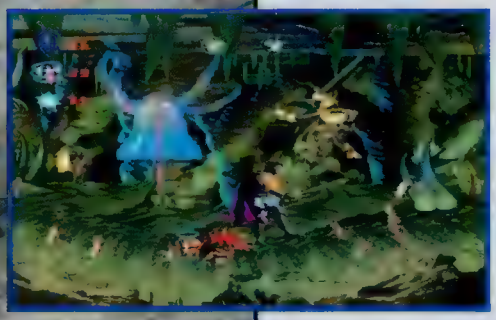
LEGACY OF KAIN
CRYSTAL DYNAMICS

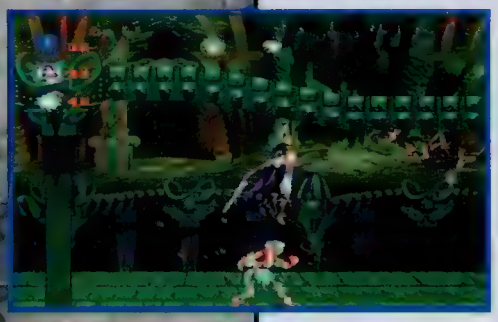
SHINING SWORD
AMERICAN LASER GAMES

SHINING SWORD
AMERICAN LASER GAMES

SKELETON WARRIORS

PUBLISHED BY PLAYMATES - DEVELOPED BY NEVERSOFT





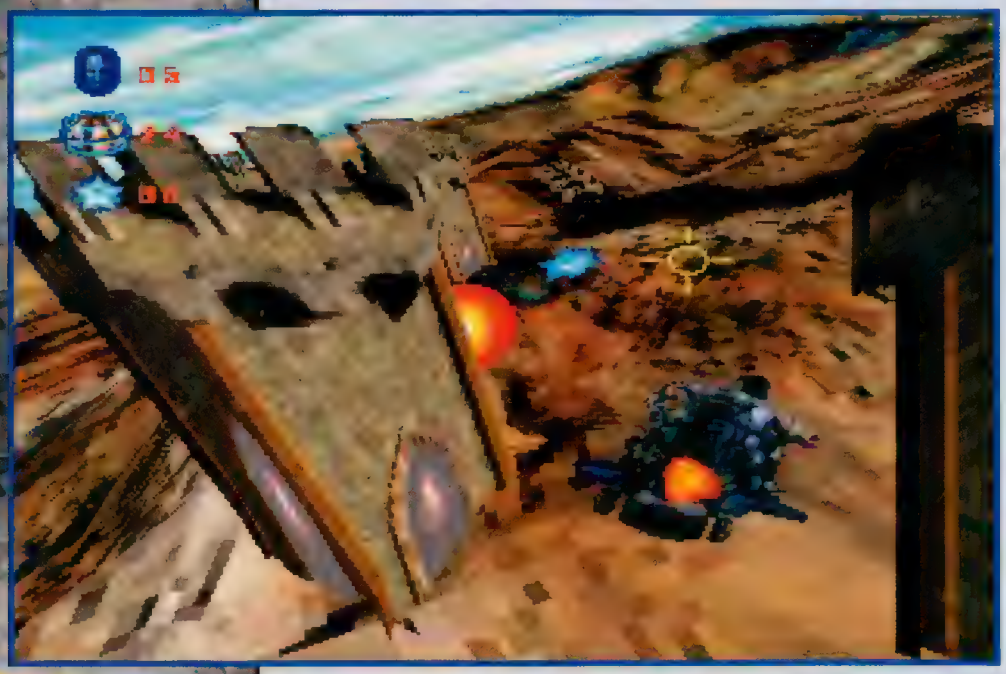
For those of you who have been wondering aloud: "Whatever happened to games like Golden Axe and Final Fight?" I have good news for you — they are alive and well and have just appeared under the name "Skeleton Warriors." The title is Playmates Interactive Entertainment's first game on the PlayStation and is a port of the Saturn original, developed internally by Neversoft.

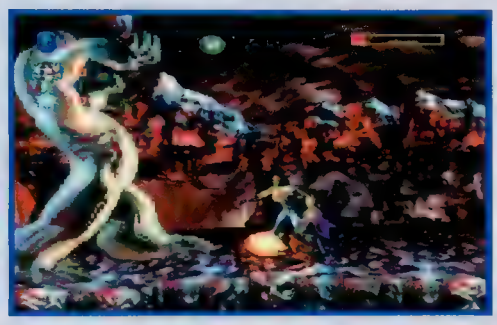
The game is based on Playmates' action figures and cartoons and it is a hack&slash&shoot-fest, where you (as Prince Lightstar ... the Star Wars references are all over this game) make your way through over 20 levels of side-scroll (with a 3D twist to it) action, with some 3D shooting (similar to the Land Speeder) thrown into the mix. The basic story involves one Baron Dark and his evil intentions for his half of the Lightstar Crystal (it seems that the Baron can change anyone with an evil heart to an evil skeleton slave). Yep, that's right! You must defeat the Baron's evil minions and take possession of the other half of the crystal or life will just ... well, suck!

Although the gameplay is pretty much

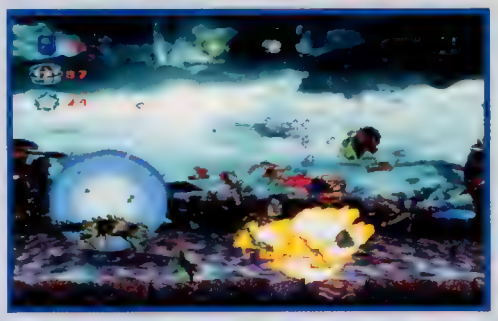
standard 16-bit fare (with more than a passing resemblance to the arcade classics mentioned above), Skeleton Warriors makes a case for the most gorgeous 2D graphics to yet appear on the PlayStation. The dark theme of the game is carried over in the backgrounds, enemies and play environment — from caves to high-tech worlds. The music is equal to the task, with an original, up-beat, sort of classical, soundtrack — courtesy of the industry's most effective self-promoter, Tommy Tallarico. (Dude, it's time to get a new jacket — the Liberace look is getting a tad stale.)

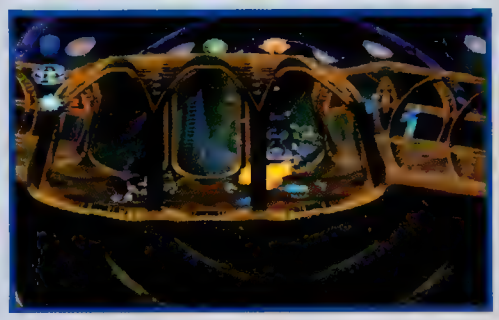
The game's play mechanics are solid, with an emphasis on shooting/slashing. In addition to slashing and shooting, Lightstar can walk, run, duck, defend, jump, jump attack, hang from and move across, ceilings and use special weapons. Power-ups are available in the form of energy and ammunition for your sword, and for a number of special weapons (bombs, mines, 3-way shot, etc.) One pretty cool gameplay feature is that, when you kill some enemies, they will regenerate if you don't pickup the power-up that they drop, within a certain amount of time. The

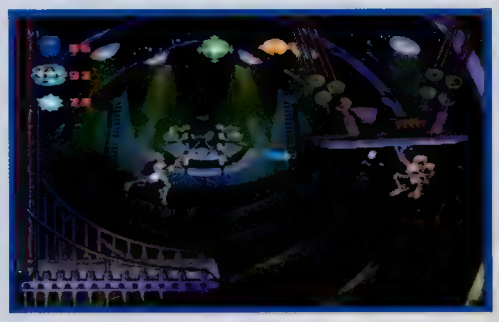


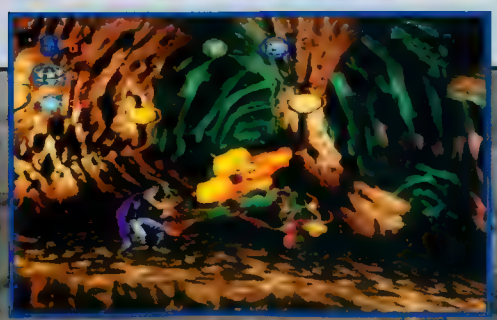


EX RATED









flying levels won't win any graphics or originality awards on their own. (They look almost like they were thrown-in to prove that the developers had a next-generation, 3D thing going on.) All-in-all, it's nothing you haven't done before, but it's a pretty cool environment you are doing it in.

I have mixed feelings about Skeleton Warriors. It is obviously a quality product and VERY well drawn. The gameplay is solid and tight, if uninspired. But, I found myself simply plodding through the game and not enjoying it as much as the graphics and music would lead me to believe that I should. It's good, just not great. One final comment: if you want to enjoy Skeleton Warriors the way that I think the game's designers intended, don't play on "Easy." Go straight to "Normal" difficulty, you will be glad that you did.

Dave

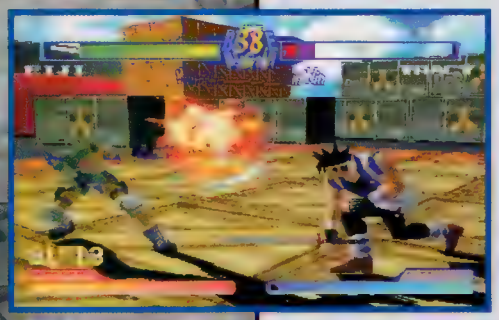
THE BOTTOM LINE_

86%

I have mixed feelings about Skeleton Warriors. It is obviously a quality product and VERY well drawn. The gameplay is solid and tight, if uninspired. But, I found myself simply plodding through the game and not enjoying it as much as the graphics and music would lead me to believe that I should. It's good, just not great.

BATTLE ARENA TOSHINDEN 2

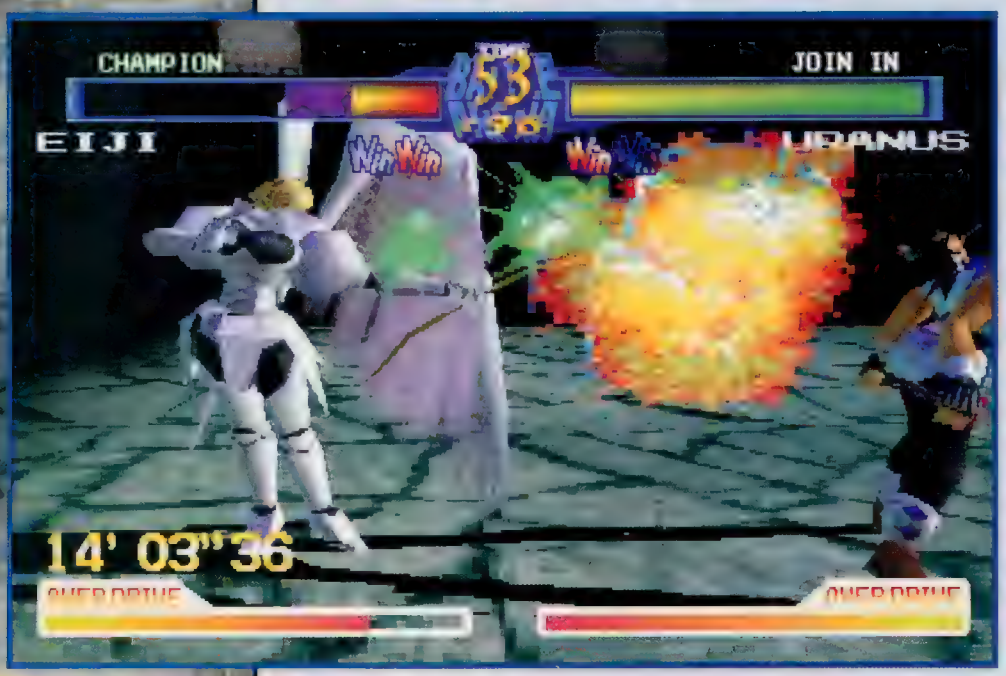
PUBLISHED BY PLAYMATES - DEVELOPED BY TAKARA/TAMSOFT

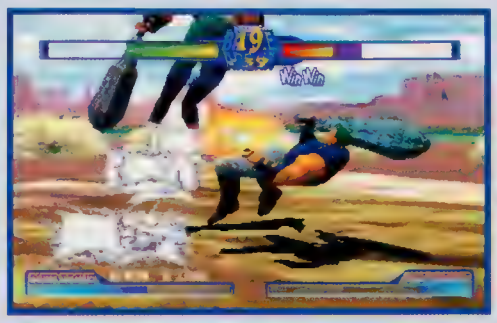


Battle Arena Toshinden, the one-on-one fighting game that wowed the masses upon the launch of the PlayStation, has spawned a sequel, titled aptly enough ... "Battle Arena Toshinden 2". The original, at the time it debuted last year, was a technological feat, sporting an amazing 3D polygonal engine that went way beyond the likes of Sega's Virtua Fighter (Saturn). This was the landmark game that really showed off the PlayStation's polygon-pushing power and Sony made extensive use of this title in their original advertising campaign (going so far as to even use Sophia, the leather-clad, whip-wielding dominatrix, as their makeshift mascot).

Well, here it is close to a year later and we now have the sequel, released not by Sony as one would logically think, but by Playmates Interactive Entertainment. As with most sequels in the world of video game publishing, they are subjected to comparisons to their predecessors by the gaming press, so why should I deviate from the norm? With that said, let's first take a look at the new additions, improvements and features that have been added to the game.

First off, all of the characters from the original Toshinden are back, with the addition of two new bosses and two hidden bosses — making for a total of 15 characters in all. The new characters are just as unique as the originals. There's Chaos, a sickle-carrying freak with a knack for spin moves and truly "killer" bad breath. Then, there's Tracy, a tonfa-wielding street-cop who would look at home in the Rodney King video tape. Next, there's Uranus, "winged angel of death" would be the best way to describe her. The next new entry is Master, a lackluster last boss who looks like Aladdin and carries a big sword. Lastly, there's Vermilion, a gun-toting figure of death, who eerily creeps around the screen — possibly the nastiest boss ever seen in a video game. Each character has his or her own standard set of moves as well as a "super" move that can only be executed when a special overdrive meter is filled and flashing. All of these moves are pulled off by standard but-





EX RATED

ton combinations and are almost too easy to execute. As a mater of fact, I was able to beat the game on normal with just one button. This makes the game easily beatable — even at the highest difficulty level.

The graphics are very well-done — still displayed in all their 3D texture-mapped glory. Each character is nicely detailed and animates fairly smoothly, sporting all sorts of cool graphical effects like transparencies and light-source shading. Yet, with all of the processing power of the hardware, the characters still tend to flicker and "block out" in some instances. The backgrounds are all new and now animate. Lights flicker, drapes open, cars whiz by, people cheer and clouds scroll — very nice. My personal favorite background so far is Sophia's; a discotechque complete with strobe lights and blaring techno music.

While there certainly are some great features in Battle Arena Toshinden 2, the game isn't a big leap over the last. In fact, being that there are now so many 3D fighters out in the marketplace, and more on the way, flashy 3D engines aren't enough. Games like Street Fighter Alpha and Tekken 2 have amazingly intuitive game mechanics and extra options such as training and tournament modes, this is where Toshinden 2 lags behind. Although there is plenty here to like and look at, there's not much in the way of gameplay or extra features. My overall recommendation is that it's worth a purchase, if you thoroughly enjoyed the first and are looking for a logical extension. If not, it might be worth it to wait until September...

Greg

THE BOTTOM LINE

84%

Although there is plenty here to like and look at, there's not much in the way of gameplay or extra features. My overall recommendation is that it's worth a purchase, if you thoroughly enjoyed the first and are looking for a logical extension. If not, it might be worth it to wait until September...

THE FINAL ROUND

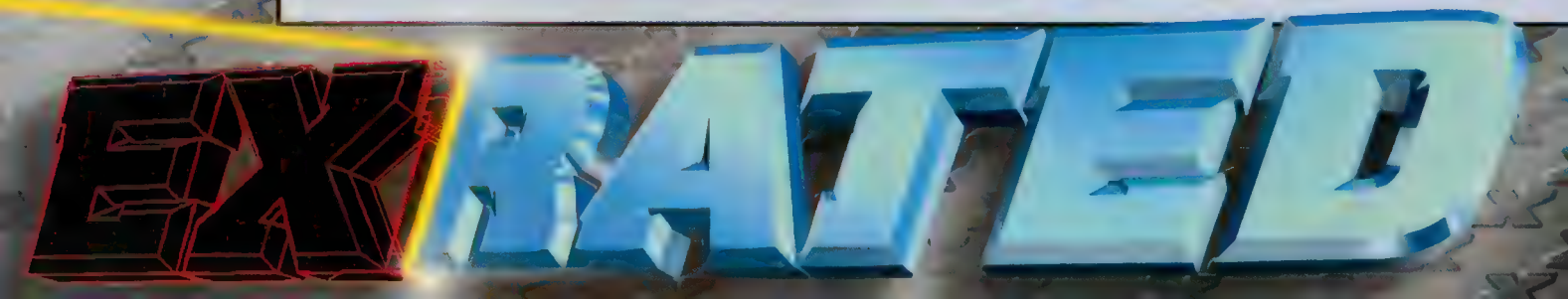
PUBLISHED AND DEVELOPED BY KONAMI

As most of you "Extremists" know, I am an avid golfer. PlayStation links aficionados are blessed with the two best golf simulations to ever grace a screen in EA Sports' PGA 96 and Interplay's VR Golf. The question put before those of us who are completely addicted to the game of golf is: "Do we need another one?" This is where Konami's "The Final Round" comes in.

Final Round is strictly arcade golf. The play mechanics are very simple and the interface offers precious little control over the game, when compared to the above-mentioned "Gold" titles. The game lets the player compete as one of six different golfers, each defined by polygonal graphics and a very generic look. There is Stroke Play, Match Play, a Skins Match and a Training Mode, where you can practice on any one of the eighteen holes presented in the game. "Eighteen?", you say? That's right, Final Round offers only ONE generic course ... not good.

Graphically, the game's polygon world is pretty primitive. There is very little diversity in the terrain, grass is depicted via very light textures on two shades of green and there only seemed to be two kinds of trees! On the positive side, water is depicted nicely, with good-looking reflections. There are a number of camera angles (seven, to be exact) and a default replay system that is called-up after completing a shot. The basic graphic feel of the game, as you can probably gather from these pictures, is sparse and empty. It has the look of a last-generation arcade machine pushing a fairly limited number of polygons. As a result of this, I get the feeling that this game was put together fairly quickly and without much concern for all of the detail and subtlety that makes video golf a desirable pastime, or much analysis of the competition on the part of the product development team.

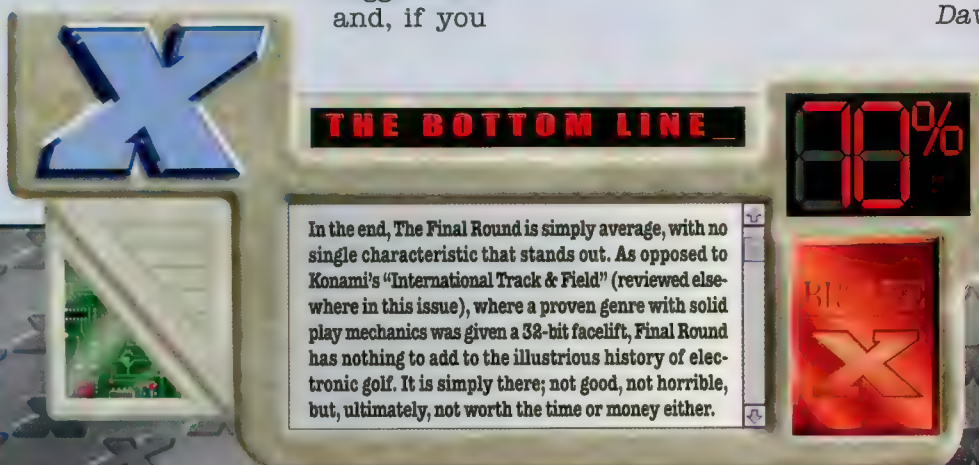
The same can be said for the game's play mechanics. There is nothing play-wise that hasn't been tried before, or executed more effectively, in other games. The main problem I have with the system is that it isn't consistent. You can hit the ball well



and along the suggested line, and not put the ball in the fairway. Instead, it will end up short, in a bunker or in a water hazard. The computer almost always under clubs in its suggestions and, if you are in the rough, you are simply guessing at what club to use — the normal rules of golf do not apply. These inconsistencies in the play environment become even more apparent on the green. The grid system is completely useless (it rotates with you, when you are trying to line-up a putt) and, because of the simplistic nature of the graphic environment, they can't be read without a decent grid system. The result? ... VERY frustrating putting and high scores.

In the end, The Final Round is simply average, with no single characteristic that stands out. As opposed to Konami's "International Track & Field" (reviewed elsewhere in this issue), where a proven genre with solid play mechanics was given a 32-bit facelift, Final Round has nothing to add to the illustrious history of electronic golf. It is simply there; not good, not horrible, but, ultimately, not worth the time or money either.

Dave

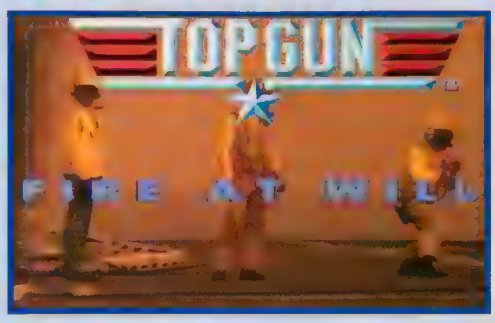

THE BOTTOM LINE_
70%
In the end, The Final Round is simply average, with no single characteristic that stands out. As opposed to Konami's "International Track & Field" (reviewed elsewhere in this issue), where a proven genre with solid play mechanics was given a 32-bit facelift, Final Round has nothing to add to the illustrious history of electronic golf. It is simply there; not good, not horrible, but, ultimately, not worth the time or money either.

TOP GUN

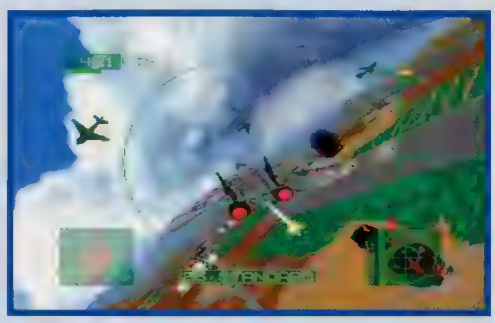
PUBLISHED AND DEVELOPED BY SPECTRUM HOLOBYTE

I feel the need ... the need for a Top Gun sequel! Well, not exactly a sequel, more like an update of the original NES 8bit version. That's right, all you arm chair fighter jocks out there, Spectrum HoloByte is set to release Top Gun, Fire at Will, for the PlayStation. Simultaneously developed for the PC and the PlayStation, Top Gun, Fire at Will, takes direct aim at Namco's Air Combat. Make no mistake about it, this is not, I repeat not, a military flight sim; it's a true arcade barnburner.

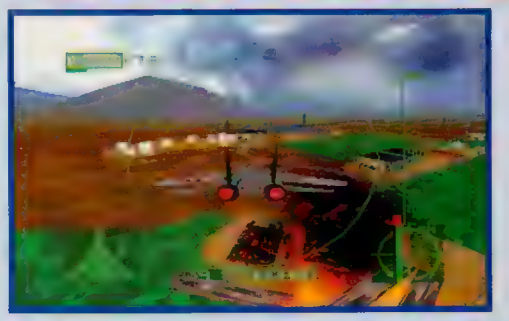
As I mentioned before, the Latest Top Gun is an updated version of the original Nintendo game. However, the only thing these two have in common is the name (Konami did the 8bit version). Much like the arcade classic Afterburner, Top Gun puts you directly in the line of fire, ready for action. With extensive use of full motion video, the story is laid out in front of you, with a series of briefings and news reports. The game starts out at NAS Miramar, home of the Navy's elite fighter weapons school ... Top

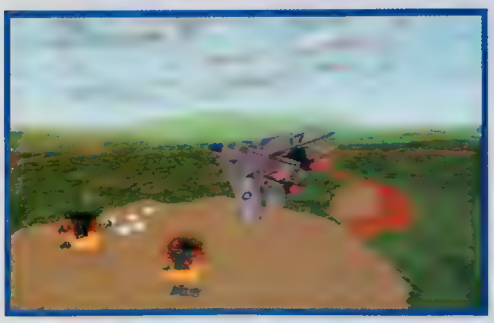


Gun. There, actor James Tolkan (the bald guy), from the original movie, leads you through a series (six in all) of training missions at Miramar. Once you've completed the Top Gun school, you ship out to Guantanamo Bay, Cuba, where you are tasked with beating back the invading hordes. Additionally, you will run into some unmarked Migs that will later be identified as the "cadre". If you successfully beat back the invading Cubans (7 missions in all), you will be rewarded with the opportunity to deploy to South Korea where, once again, your mission (8 in all) will be to beat back the invaders from the North. Here, too, you will be flying not only against veteran pilots from the North, but also against this mysterious cadre, which you begin to learn more about during these missions. Finally, if you're successful, you will ship out to Libya, where our friend Khadafi is beginning to flex his muscles. All of the information you need is brought to you in beautiful, full motion video, via Julie Carmen (of "In the Mouth of Madness" fame) who acts as a vet-



EX RATED





eran foreign correspondent. It is Julie who eventually brings the secret of the cadre to light.

Well, the story line is certainly intriguing; but how does the gameplay translate? As I mentioned earlier, this is a true arcade shooter, encompassing all that is both good and bad about that classification. First, the good: your fighter is very easy to control through all types of maneuvers, although a little too easy at times. (Sort of like that power steering feeling you get with cars from the 1970's.) Additionally, each level is sufficiently unique, in terms of skills required to progress. Just when you think you're "too cool for school", a heat seeker rams your six. Last, but certainly not least: there are more than enough targets of opportunity to keep your trigger finger happy for quite some time. The only thing keeping this game from earning our Gold award is the minimal terrain differences. Most of the levels look very similar, although they certainly don't play that way. The bottom line, however, is that Top Gun is one of the best airborne shooters of the year. It has earned a spot in my permanent collection.

Alex

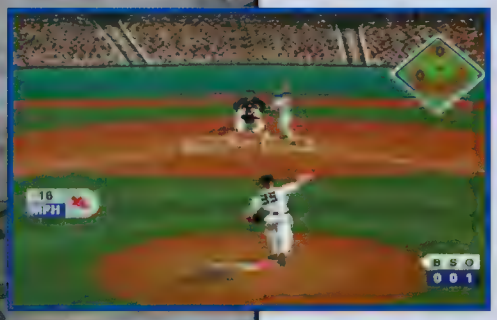
THE BOTTOM LINE

88%

The only thing keeping this game from earning our Gold award is the minimal terrain differences. Most of the levels look very similar, although they certainly don't play that way. The bottom line, however, is that Top Gun is one of the best airborne shooters of the year. It has earned a spot in my permanent collection.

TRIPLE PLAY 97

PUBLISHED BY EA SPORTS - DEVELOPED BY EA CANADA



I have to begin this review by letting you all know that the reviewable version of the game was given to me two days before our editorial deadline for this issue. I also need to tell you that playing Triple Play 97 has consumed almost every hour of my time, during these two days; so much so that I am going to dispense with the usual pleasantries and dive right into the details of EA Sports' latest effort.

THE GOOD STUFF:

The first time I fired up the game, I could feel my jaw dropping, as Triple Play's "Virtual Stadium" technology came roaring to life. As the off-camera singer let loose with the last few bars of our National Anthem, the camera came zooming over the top of Camden Yards and dropped me off right next to the scoreboard. Although it was simply an SGI-style intro., the real-time stadiums proved to be almost as breath-taking. All 28 stadiums are modeled in true 3D, and some of them even include buildings beyond the bleachers ... also modeled in 3D! The game features a total of 12 different camera angles, encompassing different fielding and hitting views — including views from behind the pitcher and fielders.

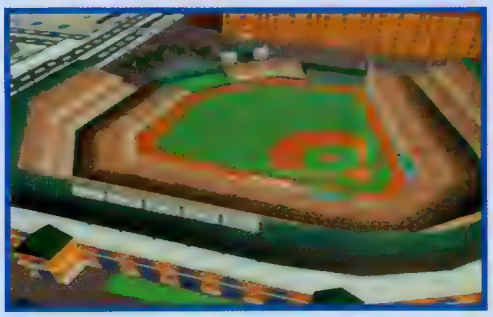
This feeling of realism is carried over into what has to be, the most impressive play-by-play ever delivered in a sports video game. There are none of those tell-tale breaks, or any change in pitch as pieces of sentences are strung together, as was common with Sega's "Sportstalk" system on the Genesis. The announcer makes the call with almost no lag-time, calls out the player's name, summarizes his game statistics, makes color commentary and NEVER becomes boring. As good as the voice was in Bottom of the Ninth, this is even better and is certainly the new standard by which future sports games will be judged.

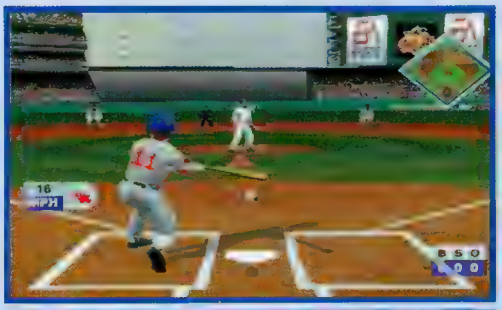
The statistical database is enormous, with individual players (Triple Play 97 sports both an MLBPA and MLB license ... 700 real players, 28 real teams) statistics kept in 15 different offensive categories and nine different pitching/defensive categories. The game also keeps track of League Leaders in seven different statistical areas (a little on the thin side for my tastes). The player can control defensive positioning and offensive strategy on the fly and can activate any base runner, at any time, as his active offensive player. Batting and pitching mechanics are arcade style, with some simulation overtones. You can choose to try and hit the long ball, line drives or put the ball on the ground and pitching is a combination of a little "bendy ball" and realistic tiring of the pitcher — dependant upon arm fatigue (if you've been throwing too many fastballs) and the computer's analysis of that player.

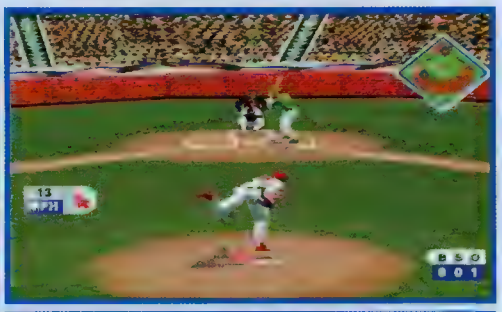
THE NOT SO GOOD STUFF:

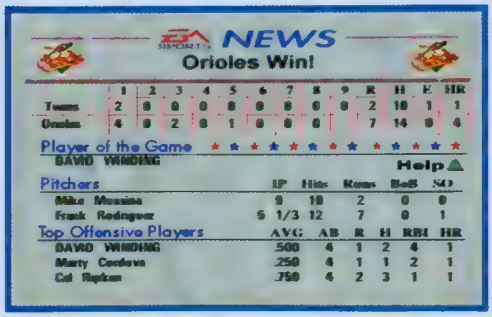
Ok, so we've looked at all of the stuff that makes Triple Play 97 a "Gold" title.

EX RATED









Shootout. This is particularly evident in the batter animation, where the swing is kind of herky-jerky and could have benefited from a little 30 fps action. It also manifests itself in gameplay, where the fielder diving animation is slow to react and many a ground out is turned into a single. In addition, the play mechanics never really challenge you to become a better player. I started my season on "Pro" and, although I haven't had a cakewalk through the league, my playing style really hasn't changed since game 1. This is where Konami's game has the competition knocked. If Triple Play had made use of the icon-based batting system found in this title, the difficulty could have been just right and all other games would have been blown away.

Minor problems include a lack of collision detection in the stadium walls, seats and boundaries (it would have been cool to slam a few off facades and scoreboards in the Home Run Derby), player throwing arms that switch, when using the behind-the-pitcher camera view, outfielders that seem to have bionic arms, infielders that disappear in the high, behind-the-pitcher, camera view and VERY conservative computer runners that very rarely run a hit to the wall in to a double.

In closing, baseball fans will definetely want to spend a lot of time with Triple Play 97. The game is beautiful to see and hear, fun and quick to play and offers enough options to keep the sim. fan from thumbing his nose at the product — a good, but not perfect, combination of arcade challenge and baseball strategy.

Dave

Now, let's focus on what keeps it from being a perfect game of baseball. To begin with, player animation is a little rough. The sprite-based players are no match for the smooth animation found in games like Bottom of the Ninth and NBA

THE BOTTOM LINE

88%

In closing, baseball fans will definetely want to spend a lot of time with Triple Play 97. The game is beautiful to see and hear, fun and quick to play and offers enough options to keep the sim. fan from thumbing his nose at the product — a good, but not perfect, combination of arcade challenge and baseball strategy.

FLOATING RUNNER

PUBLISHED BY T*HQ - DEVELOPED BY XING

T*HQ's Floating Runner is the American version of the Japanese original, developed by Xing Entertainment. It is one of those games that can be classified as a "gamer's game." What is a gamer's game, you ask? Well, the best answer to that is by example. Chiki Chiki Boys, Dynamite Heady on the Genesis, Astal on the Saturn and Jumping Flash on the PlayStation are all gamer's games — quirky, VERY Japanese in graphic style, with play mechanics that just won't quit and little chance of penetrating the mass market in America.

Floating Runner finds you assuming the role of either Lay or Cress — two little spiky-haired waifs who make their way through multiple levels of jumping, running and shooting action — with a texture-mapped, real-time polygon world as your backdrop (each character takes a different path toward his or her goal.) You shoot all kinds of different characters, including snowmen, robots, little bunny looking things, little birdie looking things, kids on floating rocks ... well, you get the drill.

Don't get me wrong, I am not making fun of the game — I actually LOVE playing this stuff. But, Floating Runner isn't the best that this genre has to offer. It was released earlier this year in Japan and a lot has changed on the PlayStation since — most notably the introduction and development of Crash Bandicoot, Pandemonium and Bubsy 3D. Floating Runner's graphic world pales by comparison and the characters and enemies aren't as interesting. You are given a 100 count to finish a level (I don't know what the timing method was but each tick of the clock is worth about 10 seconds) and not finishing is "game over." In practice, it is very hard not to finish within the given limits. This is the only way you truly die. Floating Runner gives the player unlimited continues on all difficulty levels, where you pickup from exactly the point that you left off.

While the polygon graphics and animation are O.K. and the colors, at times beautiful, my main complaint with the game lies in the designer's choice of camera angles. There are two in the game — one that is almost a top-down

EX RATED

view and one that is just slightly skewed from the first. It's kind of like walking around with a heavy weight on your head — you can't quite lift your head enough to see the world around you. It's too bad, because I feel like I would have enjoyed Floating Runner more if I could see more of the world (a la Jumping Flash). My other gripe is the artificial nature in which the game stops you from proceeding into areas of the world that are off-limits. Instead of having a fence or barrier, your character simply stops in his or her tracks ... pretty cheap.

In spite of its limitations and the better gaming experiences offered by the competition, I do like Floating Runner. There's plenty of jumping, plenty of shooting, classic Japanese "feel-good" music and a strong look and continuity to the play environment. While it may not be my first choice in action/platform gaming, it is enjoyable and definitely worth taking a look at. I would recommend, for all but the most avid action/platform gaming freaks (DH — you know who you are), that you rent the game before buying, however.

Dave

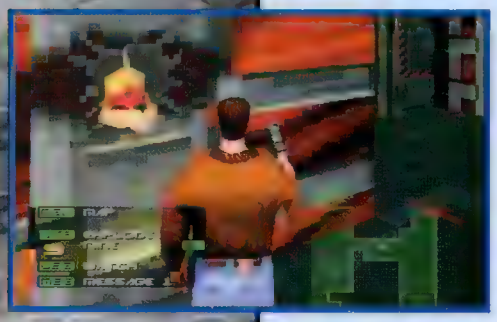
THE BOTTOM LINE

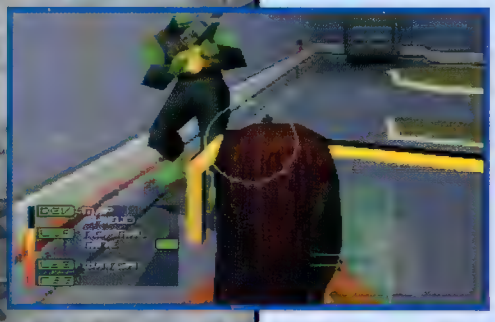
79%

While it may not be my first choice in action/platform gaming, it is enjoyable and definitely worth taking a look at. I would recommend, for all but the most avid action/platform gaming freaks (DH — you know who you are), that you rent the game before buying, however.

FADE TO BLACK

PUBLISHED BY EA - DEVELOPED BY DELPHINE





Paris-based Delphine Software International is one of the few, well respected, European talents who achieved their name in today's crowded industry — by producing innovative cutting-edge software. First there was "Out of This World" and then "Flashback" — still, to this day, two of the most memorable and remarkable action/adventure titles I've ever played. Both of these games were addicting and challenging, utilizing the most advanced technology and techniques available at that time by blending the perfect combination of a quality story, great graphics, intense action and strategic gameplay. Continuing in this tradition is Delphine / EA's "Fade to Black" for the PlayStation, which is the second installment in the Flashback series, originally released for the PC last year.

Fade to Black offers a total of six huge and diverse levels — each with additional sub-levels and sub-missions, as well as numerous 3D rendered enemies and traps. The programmers at Delphine have veered away from the traditional 2D, bitmapped, rotoscoped graphics used in titles like Flashback and have, instead, developed a completely new 3D polygon engine. It's truly like a 3D version of a side scrolling action game, where you are constantly

FADE TO BLACK
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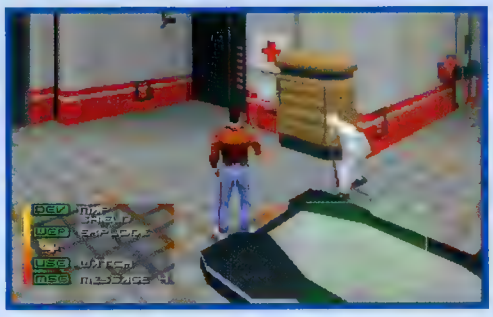
in control of your character (Conrad) from a behind the back perspective.

Conrad has a myriad of moves at his disposal, just as in Flashback. He can run, jump, shoot, duck, side-step, throw mines, etc. — utilizing every possible button on the PS control pad. When shooting, he assumes a crouching position, and a crosshair appears on the enemy when you have him in your sights. You would think that controlling your character from this angle would get a little confusing, and it is — at first. With this myriad of button options at your fingertips, there is a slight learning curve. But, after just a few minutes of gameplay, the controls easily become second-nature.

Besides the unique 3D engine, the graphics in Fade to Black are its biggest asset, with the exception of the funky texture-mapping on Conrad. (What's up with the shoulder blade-based goiters?) The levels vary from futuristic machinery-laden rooms and halls of a star cruiser, to dingy, robot-infested underground mining tunnels, to organic, pulsing, flesh-like alien worlds. Between levels, the player is treated to CG rendered cut-scenes, which add to the science fiction flavor and overall theme. The music is also noteworthy, composed like that of a movie soundtrack. Only at certain

EXPATED



instances will you hear it, usually triggered by certain "hot spots". For example, if you are about to enter a dangerous room full of aliens, the music will start quietly and build in suspense. Even Conrad gets into the act with his own little comments like, "where'd you learn to shoot", if an alien misses him and other silly nonsense like that.

Each level starts you off with a message — giving a brief mission summary; the rest is up to you to figure out. One level, in true Flashback fashion, has you rescuing an old scientist held hostage and escorting him out of danger, most have you searching for an important item and then getting to an exit quick. The best tips I can give you are: #1: save often - don't let a few minutes go by without saving your game, or you'll regret it and, #2: utilize your map, as the later levels are huge — this will save you a lot of unnecessary running around.

It is extremely evident that Fade to Black is a special game. I found playing it to be an amazing experience that captured the flavor of Flashback, but taken in an entirely different direction. It's too bad there hasn't been more hype and some kind of advertising campaign for it. With the combination of a perfect blend of intriguing storyline, non-stop action, intricate strategy, extraordinary gameplay and great graphics, this game looks like it could end up being a sleeper hit in '96.

Greg

THE BOTTOM LINE

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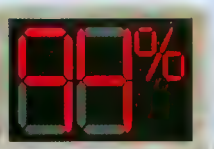
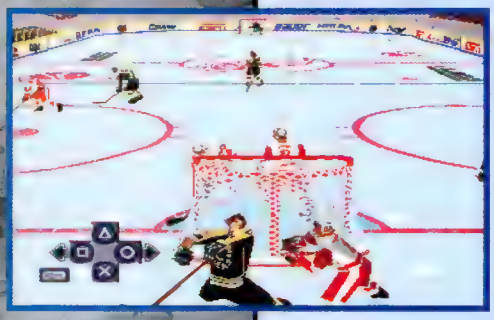


NHL POWERPLAY '96

PUBLISHED BY VIRGIN - DEVELOPED BY RADICAL ENTERTAINMENT



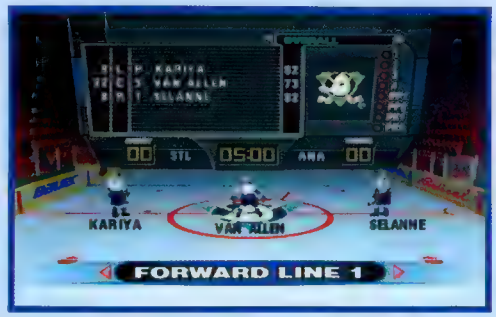
Get ready hockey fans, Virgin is set to release their first sports title for the PlayStation, and their version of the greatest game played with a puck! NHL Powerplay '96 is set to take on the earlier released (and well received) 'NHL Face Off' by Sony, while they also look to grab some market share, before EA Sports releases NHL Hockey 97 this October.

Powerplay — as in graphical powerhouse! This is what Virgin was striving for with the creation of Powerplay '96, because the Hi-res graphical presentation will knock you off your skates. The folks at Radical Entertainment (the developer of the game) did a masterful job with the level of detail. This can easily be appreciated by simply looking at the screen shots. And, as fine as these photos are, they still don't do the real thing 100% justice — it's got to be seen to be believed.

However, as we've stated many, many, many, times before, we don't review paintings, we play GAMES! Who wants to just look at some pretty pictures, if the gameplay can't hang with the competition? Well, let's see what we get with NHL Powerplay's NHL and NHLPA license? Check. Full or partial season play? Check. Playoffs? Check. Player trades? Negative. Full season stats? Negative. Instant replay? Check. Announcer commentary? Check. Fighting? Negative. Realistic AI? Check. Multiple camera angles? Negative.

Well, for those of you keeping score, that's six pluses and four minuses. For my taste, that's a little heavy on the negatory (good buddy) side. And certainly, when we consider what the negatives are — one camera angle, no stats, no fighting, and no trades, I've got to say that, at first glance, it looked like Virgin was going to have an uphill battle on this one. But wait just a blue-line, slapshot second there Jaromir! We still got drop dead presentation and an Einsteinesque AI. Them's two VERY big pluses. So how does all this shake down, anyway?

Let's start with the NHL Face Off comparo, straight up! Hands down, Powerplay has the 'feel' of the game. Your teammates always seem to be in position, whether it's in the corners for a wrister or at the blue line for a monster slap, your guys know where they like the puck, and it's a cinch getting it to them. On defense, your guys get back and react quickly, and rarely let an offensive player get in the zone unchecked. Unfortunately, all this 'feel' comes with a



EX RATED

action. I would have liked to see a camera that, for example, would swoop down and get right behind that beautiful, polygon version of the Great One as he moved past the blue (and the last defender), on a breakaway.

Face Off, on the other hand, offers a handful of different viewing angles, thus allowing the gamer to get as close to the action as he/she (any female hockey players out there?) wishes. The trade here being that Sony's game is in a resolution of 320 x 200 and is not nearly as detailed or precise, graphically.

All in all, Virgin offers up a fine rendition of video hockey. But, with the lack of perspectives and the omission of season stats and player trades, NHL Powerplay '96 falls in the same category as Sony's NBA Shootout — a Gold title because of graphics and gameplay, but, because of the shortcomings in the statistical database, a game that is not all that it could have been! But, hey, that's why there's a "96" at the end of the title, right? In video game sports, there's always next year and Virgin and Radical Entertainment have started with a very strong product. Hopefully, it will only get better.

Eric

price — that being the solitary camera angle. The camera, in gameplay, works very well and will zoom in and out — ever so slightly — to give you the feeling that you are playing in a 32-bit environment, but itnever really gets close enough to the

THE BOTTOM LINE_

92%

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INT. TRACK & FIELD

PUBLISHED AND DEVELOPED BY KONAMI

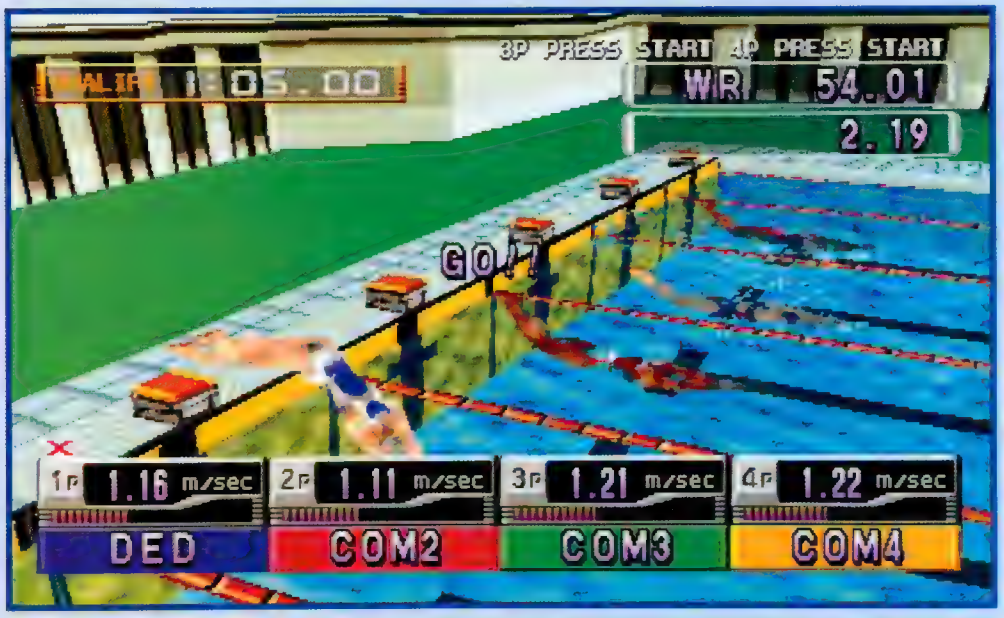
The Summer Games in Atlanta are on their way and, the video game industry is set to deliver the Olympic experience to button thrashers the world over. Both Konami and US Gold are releasing Track and Field games this summer. The subject of this review, of course, is Konami's International Track and Field. Some of my fondest memories in the "early" days of the video game industry are centered around daily Summer Games competitions on the Commodore 64. Aside from a couple of token efforts for 16 bit, there really hasn't been a good Track and Field game since.

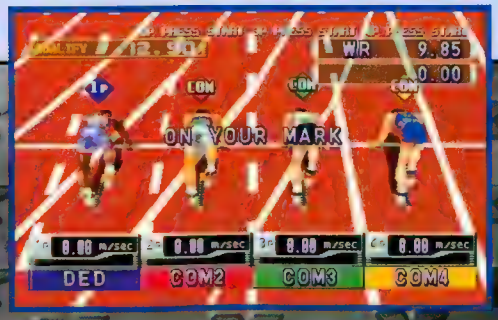
International Track and Field does a great job of blending the old with the new: the old being the joystick wiggling, finger numbing action required to compete in each event; the new being awesome 3D graphics and animation. Like the games of old, the gamer gets to compete in a number of traditional events (11 in all), ranging from the 100 meter dash to 100 meter free-style swimming. Additionally, the gamer can compete

for the country of his/her choice (12 in all). Before you start the competition, you can select the practice mode to hone your skills prior to entering the competition phase. Once in the competition mode, you must qualify in each event before you can compete against the world's best and go for the gold. To make the level of competition as realistic as possible, Konami made sure you could compete against up to three other medal hopefuls. (With the multi-tap.)

There's really nothing magical about the scenario; it's the level of game play that makes International Track and Field a solid contender. Whether you like sports' games or not, you can't help but be fascinated by the fluid animation. If you don't think you're actually competing in these events, you need to have your eyes checked. This brings me to the controls. Each event requires a tremendous amount of button manipulation, which is very common in track and field type games; however, this one requires so much effort, you'll think you actually competed.

EX RATED



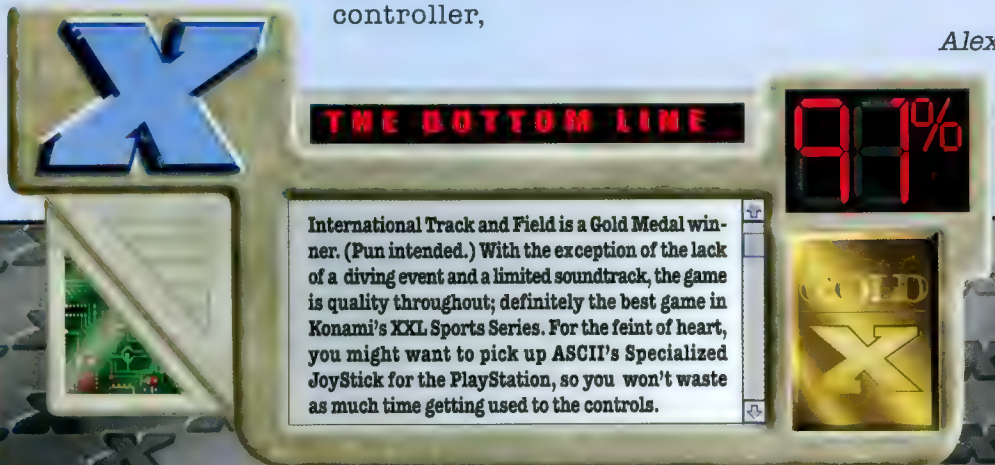


be prepared to spend quite a bit of time trying to get the right position down, before you can adequately control your athlete. Once you master the positioning, you won't want to put your controller down, as this is one of the most addictive sports games on the PlayStation.

In summary, International Track and Field is a Gold Medal winner. (Pun intended.) With the exception of the lack of a diving event and a limited soundtrack, the game is quality throughout; definitely the best game in Konami's XXL Sports Series. For the feint of heart, you might want to pick up ASCII's Specialized JoyStick for the PlayStation, so you won't waste as much time getting used to the controls. However, being the die hard Track and Field freak that I am, I'll stick with the standard controller and soak my fingers in cold water, before I go to bed at night.

Alex

Don't get me wrong, this is not a bad thing, it's actually one of the better qualities of the game. It truly does bring the realism of the events to life. However, if you only have the standard Sony controller,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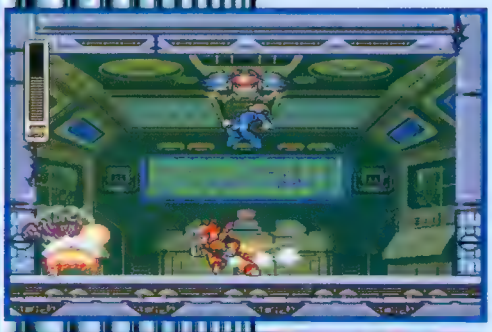
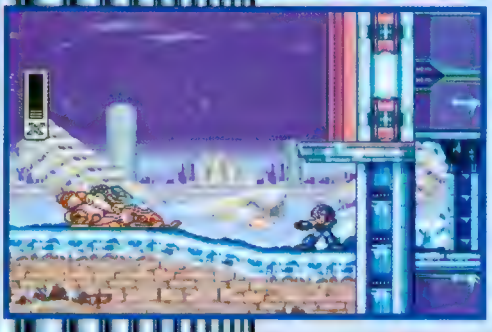
91%
GOLD

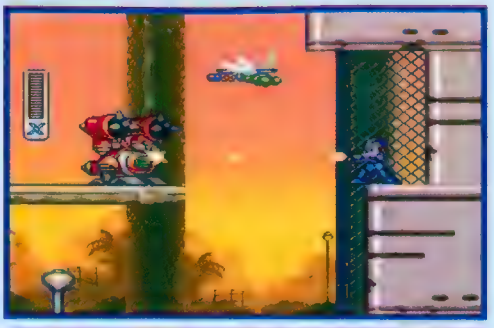


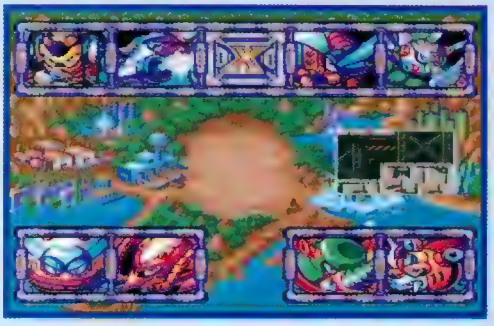


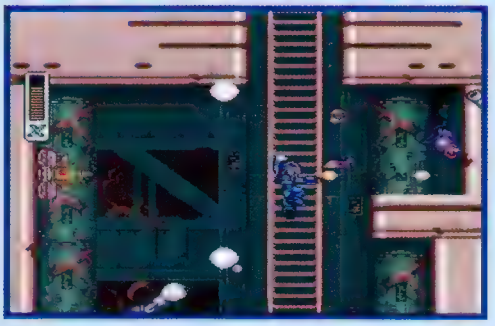
ROCKMAN X3

CAPCOM • AVAILABLE NOW JAPAN

If you grew up playing video games and owned either a NES or Super Nintendo, then you've probably played Rockman before, or, that is, Megaman over here in America. Well, Megaman has made the leap from 16 to 32bit in his first title for the Japanese PlayStation market, "Rockman X3". Although this is a PlayStation game, you certainly wouldn't guess it. With the exception of the so-so quality full motion video cartoon opening and intermission sequences and CD quality music, this game screams "16bit". Yes, there is plenty of precision jumping and lots of non-stop shooting that has become the trademark of the Megaman series; but, the graphics and sound are exceptionally lackluster, especially for the PlayStation, which is capable of so much more. At this point in time, it is highly unlikely that Rockman X3 will show up on our retail shelves; but, there is another Megaman in the works, Megaman 8, and it is rumored that this will be making its way to the US market. We'll definitely keep you posted!







GALAXIAN3

NAMCO • AVAILABLE NOW JAPAN

Although Namco has been pretty quiet on the Western front, with the first drips of information starting to flow for Tekken 2's ultimate release this September, they have been consistently releasing title after title in Japan. Their latest release, "Galaxian^3", is a semi-sequel to the love-it or hate-it coin-op (and console) shooter StarBlade. Like StarBlade, Galaxian^3 is a mixture of full motion video backgrounds, with polygon and bitmapped enemies. The game is completely "on rails" — meaning you're on a predetermined flight path and the basic goal is to aim your on-screen cursor and shoot, shoot, shoot. Although the game has pretty graphics, it ranks low on replay factor, not to mention it's extremely short. To make matters worse, the FMV is not nearly as good as it could be, with lots of fuzziness and break-up. The only other option worth mentioning, is that it is possible to play with up to four players simultaneously, with the use of a multi-tap. Don't hold your breath on this title showing up in the US, as it's scheduled for Japan release only.

EXPORT

IREM ARCADE CLASSICS

I*MAX • AVAILABLE NOW JAPAN

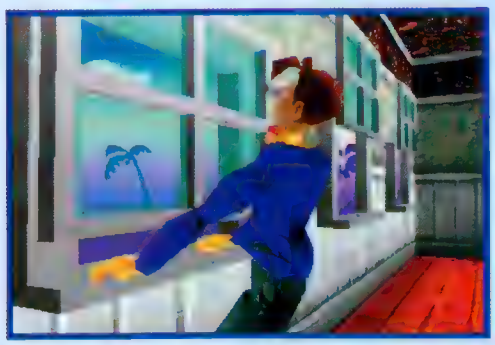
When your say Irem, you think R•Type, no? ... or, even Moon Patrol. Do you think Zippy Race? Uhhhhh ... no. 10 Yard Fight? What was that?! Ahh, Kung Fu Master, there's one we all remember pumping the quarters into, whilst standing crammed shoulder-to-shoulder, in that 2 foot narrow back room down at the local 7-11 Food Mart. Yep, that's right! A whopping three (3) games is what you'll get in this so-called classic collection, only one of which is even worthy of running on your 32-Bit, 3D wonder machine. So the question probably burning in your

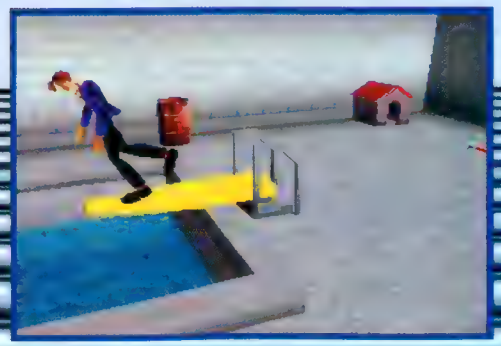
mind right now is: how much will it cost me to relive these crusty old memories once again? 70-100 bux!! Holy Ripoff, Batman! You can buy the original arcade machines for less than that!

WELCOME HOUSE

GUST • AVAILABLE NOW JAPAN

In Gust's "Welcome House", you play Keaton, a goofy looking, skinny guy, who is the brunt of his Uncle's April Fool's joke. It seems you've been invited to pay your Uncle a visit to his vast house in Florida. No problem, right? A little sun, some nice conversation with the relatives ... a good time to be had by all. Except, that's not the plan. Good old Uncle wants to see you sweat; so he's trapped you inside his house and rigged it with all sorts of boobytraps, pitfalls and hidden items. There must be a way out, and that's the goal of the game. Welcome House is quite a unique title, sporting a 3D texture mapped engine with multiple fixed camera perspectives (similar to the likes of Alone in the Dark or Resident Evil) and cartoony graphics. In fact, this game plays very much like a cartoon, with all of the wacky, slapstick antics one would expect to find, including the old "step on a rake" trick. Although the graphics and control are just so-so, Welcome House makes up for it in it's unique concept. At this time, it hasn't been picked up by any publishers in America; but, there's always a possibility that it will show up on our shores.





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The PS *Extreme* Historical Ranking Chart

EX*CAVATE* is the section where we dig up the last six months or so of our old ratings and present them on one easy-to-read page, along with a little explanation/breakdown of our rating system. Use this as your buying guide throughout the year and as a reference for those older games that you might have missed (or wish you had).

GOLD GAMES	ISSUE	RATING
NFL GameDay	December 1995	98%
Alien Trilogy	April 1996	97%
Resident Evil	April 1996	97%
Agile Warrior F111-X	November 1995	96%
Warhawk	December 1995	96%
NHL Faceoff	January 1996	96%
King's Field	Feb/March 1996	95%
Street Fighter Alpha	Feb/March 1996	95%
VR Golf	April 1996	95%
ESPN Extreme Games	November 1995	94%
PGA Tour '96	November 1995	94%
Jumping Flash	November 1995	94%
Assault Rigs	January 1996	94%
FIFA '96	January 1996	94%
The Need for Speed	April 1996	94%
Descent	Feb/March 1996	93.5%
Destruction Derby	November 1995	93%
Twisted Metal	December 1995	93%
Tekken	December 1995	93%
Doom	January 1996	93%
Thunderstrike 2	Feb/March 1996	93%
Road Rash	Feb/March 1996	93%
Ridge Racer	November 1995	92%
Return Fire	April 1996	92%
NBA Shootout	May 1996	92%
Defcon 5	January 1996	91%
Dark Stalkers	Feb/March 1996	91%
Slam 'N Jam '96	May 1996	91%
PO'ed	April 1996	90%
Magic Carpet	May 1996	90%
Gex	January 1996	90%

SILVER GAMES	ISSUE	RATING
Battle Arena Toshinden	November 1995	89%
Air Combat	November 1995	89%
Loaded	December 1995	89%
Zero Divide	Feb/March 1996	87%
Bottom of the 9th	May 1996	87%
Hardball 5	May 1996	87%
Deadly Skies	June 1996	86%
Wipeout	November 1995	86%
WWF Wrestlemania	December 1995	86%
Viewpoint	December 1995	85%
Primal Rage	Feb/March 1996	85%
Myst	April 1996	85%
NBA Jam: TE	December 1995	84%
NBA In The Zone	Feb/March 1996	84%
NBA Live 96	May 1996	84%
Off World Interceptor	December 1995	83%
Williams Arcade Classics	May 1996	83%
In the Hunt	April 1996	82%
VR Soccer	April 1996	82%
NFL Quarterback Club	April 1996	82%
Jupiter Strike	January 1996	82%
Robo Pit	June 1996	81%
Wing Commander III	June 1996	80%
Buster Brothers Collection	May 1996	80%

BRONZE GAMES	ISSUE	RATING
Blazing Dragons	June 1996	78%
Cyberspeed	January 1996	77%
Criticom	January 1996	77%
Total Eclipse Turbo	November 1995	76%
D	May 1996	75%
Mortal Kombat 3	November 1995	74%
Krazy Ivan	January 1996	74%
Shell Shock	June 1996	74%
Striker 96	May 1996	74%
Theme Park	January 1996	73%
College Slam	May 1996	73%
The Hive	May 1996	73%
Philosoma	December 1995	72%
Zoop	January 1996	72%
Johnny Bazookatone	April 1996	72%
Cyberia	Feb/March 1996	72%

TIN GAMES	ISSUE	RATING
Space Griffon VF-9	December 1995	68%
Power Serve Tennis	November 1995	62%
Cybersled	December 1995	55%
Alien Virus	April 1996	52%
Revolution X	April 1996	33%
Novastorm	November 1995	33%

WHAT DO ALL THOSE NUMBERS MEAN?

90-99%

"Must buy" games; only the best of the best get Gold. We stand behind these games.

80-89%

Great games, but lacking in some area; usually, for fans of that style of game.

70-79%

Mediocre titles that suffer from some serious flaws. Rent — don't buy.

0-69%

Tin games are to be avoided at all costs. Only die-hard gamers would buy these.

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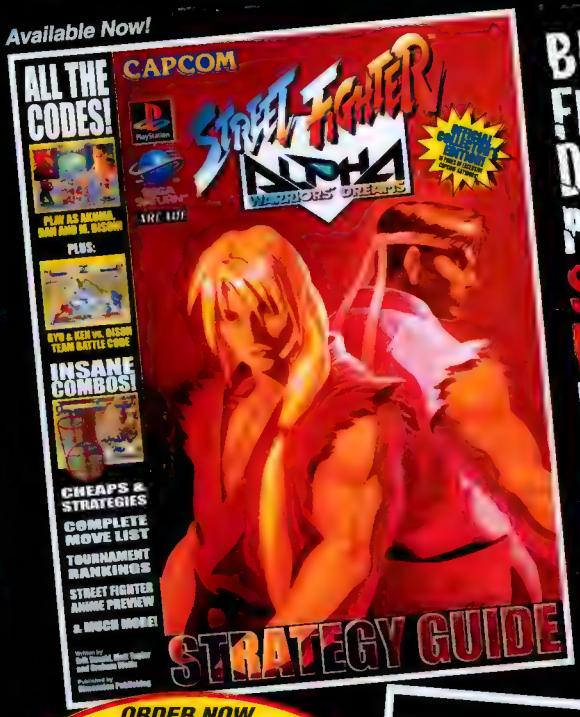

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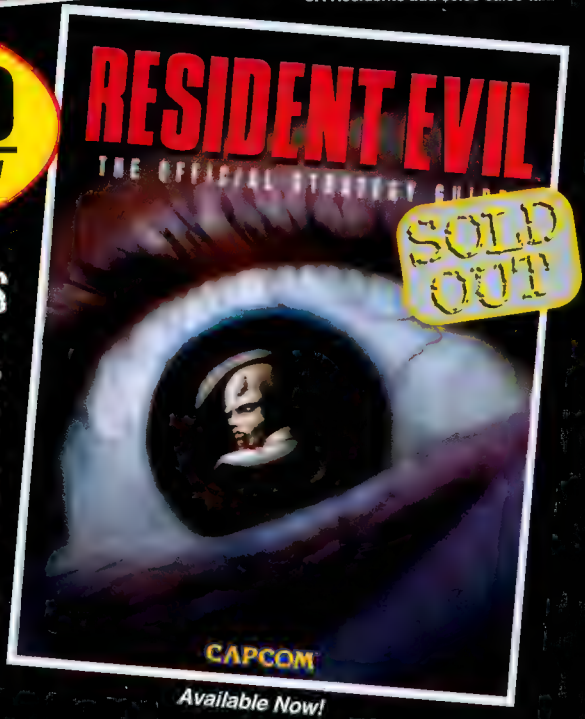

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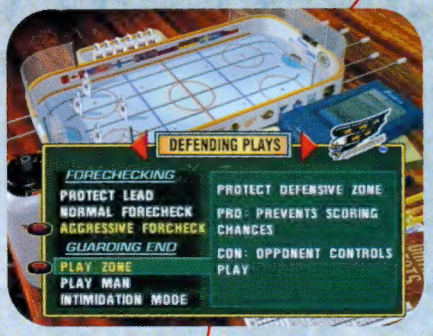

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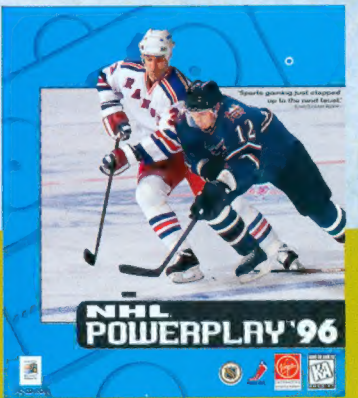

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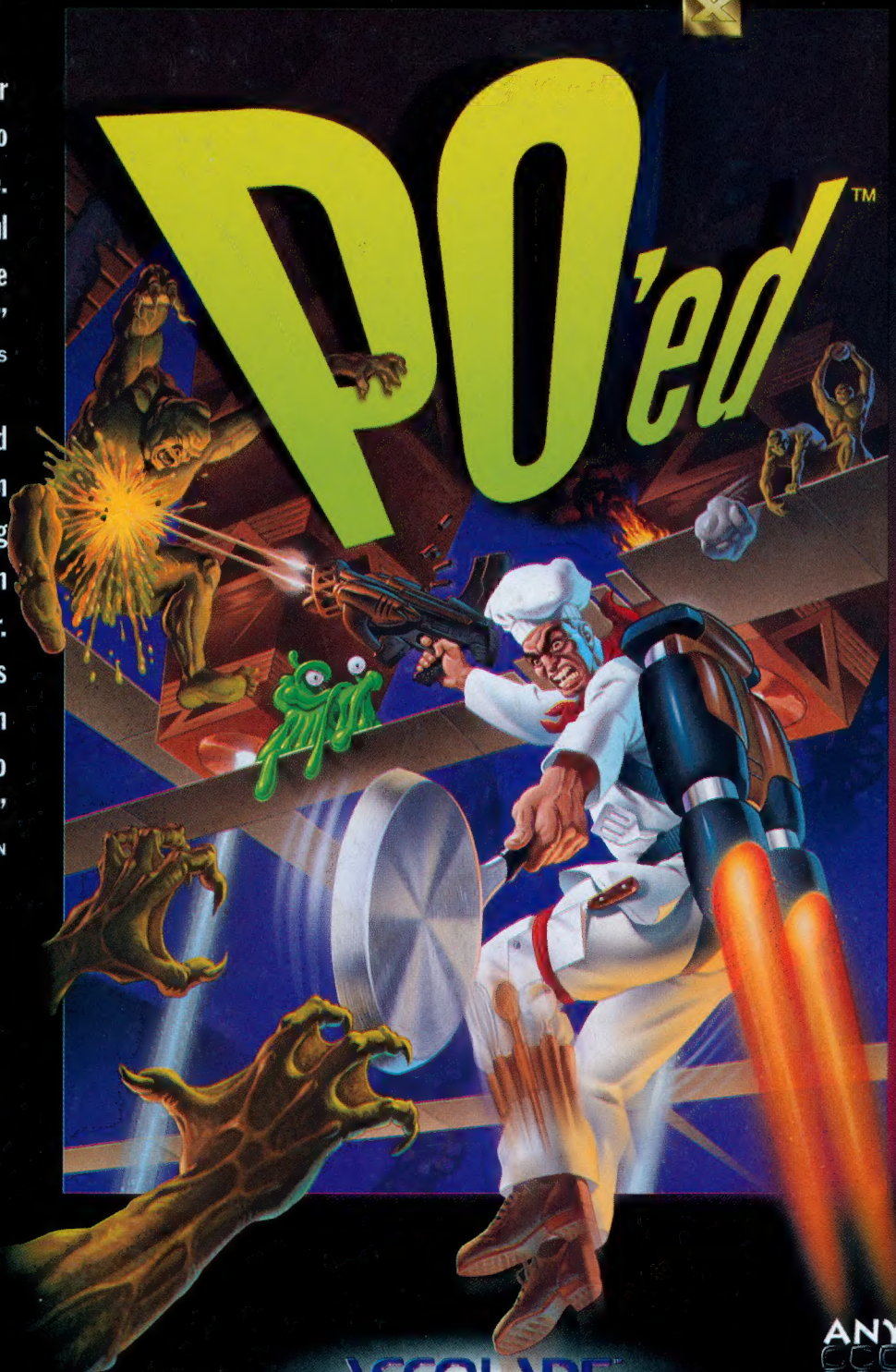

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